

**French South Pacific Policy under
Mitterrand
(1981-1993)**

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Abstract

The French presence in the South Pacific since 1981 is a topic which has been unevenly treated by accounts both in English and in French. Coverage has been skewed by selective interest in certain controversial issues such as nuclear testing in French Polynesia, the question of whether or not New Caledonia might attain independence, and the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing. *French South Pacific Policy under Mitterrand (1981-1993)* offers more dispassionate coverage of the character and implications of the French presence in the region, placing the aforementioned issues within the context of French Government policy.

Part 1 examines the administration of the French Pacific Territories since 1981. Similarities and contrasts in the economic, social and political problems confronting New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia are outlined. Particular reference is made to the influence of French party policy on the statute reforms undertaken in these territories, namely the succession of laws which were introduced in New Caledonia, culminating with the promulgation of the Matignon Accords in 1988, and the French Polynesian Internal Autonomy Statute of 1984. Statute reforms were not undertaken in Wallis and Futuna, although party political life was transformed at territorial level. Discussion of the varying fortunes of the three French Pacific Territories is concluded with an overview of their situations in the early 1990s: the prospects for continued peace and cooperation in New Caledonia, the constraints imposed on Wallis and Futuna by its isolation, lack of resources and small size, and the troubles French Polynesia has experienced because of local political instability and the suspension of nuclear testing.

Part 2 considers French foreign policy in the South Pacific since 1981. French views on the role the South Pacific plays in the geostrategy of the Fifth Republic are scrutinised to ascertain the motives behind French diplomatic efforts in the zone. This examination leads to coverage of the implications for French diplomacy of nuclear testing in French Polynesia. The challenge to France's sovereignty over its Pacific territories posed by South Pacific Forum campaigning for decolonisation is assessed. So too are French aid and cooperative efforts with regional states, activity which suggests that controversy and confrontation were not all invariably evident in the period under consideration.

The work concludes with a view of the interplay between domestic issues in the French Pacific Territories and French regional diplomacy. While much remains to be done, Paris has to an extent succeeded in promoting the integration of the French Pacific, and in improving the Fifth Republic's standing in the region.

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Abbreviations

AAP	Australian Associated Press.
ADRAF	Agence de Développement Rural et d'Aménagement Foncier.
AFP	Agence France Presse.
ALP	Australian Labor Party.
ANU	Australian National University.
ARLR	Association pour le Respect des Lois de la République.
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations.
BIPA	Banque d'Information Politique et d'Actualité.
CD	Calédonie Demain.
CEP	Centre d'Expérimentation du Pacifique.
CIP	Cook Islands Party.
CORSO	Council of Organisations for Relief Overseas.
CPSC	Comité Provisoire Socialiste Calédonien.
CRS	Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité.
DGSE	Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure.
DOM	Département d'Outre-Mer.
DOM-TOM	Départements d'Outre-Mer-Territoires d'Outre-Mer.
DP	Democratic Party.
DTSEE	Direction Territoriale de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques.
EC	European Community.
EEC	European Economic Community.
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone.
FC	Front Calédonien.
F CFP	Franc de la Communauté Financière du Pacifique.
FF	French Franc.
FI	Front Indépendantiste.
FLN	Front de Libération Nationale.
FLNKS	Front de Libération Nationale Kanake et Socialiste.
FN	Front National.
FNSC	Fédération pour une Nouvelle Société Calédonienne.
FOST	Force Océanique Stratégique.
FULK	Front Uni de Libération Kanake.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
GIGN	Groupeement d'Intervention de la Gendarmerie Nationale.
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.
IFREMER	Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer.
IEOM	Institut d'Emission d'Outre-Mer.
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques.
ITSEE	Institut Territorial de la Statistique et des Études Économiques.
ITSTAT	Institut Territorial de la Statistique.
JO	Journal Officiel.
LKS	Libération Kanake Socialiste.
MOP	Mouvement pour l'Ordre et la Paix.
MRG	Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
OCSTC	Office Culturel, Scientifique et Technique Canaque.
ODIL	Office de Développement de l'intérieur et des Iles.
ORSTOM	Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer.
Palika	Parti de Libération Kanake.
PC	Parti Communiste.

PNG	Papua New Guinea.
PS	Parti Socialiste.
PSC	Parti Socialiste Calédonien.
PSK	Parti Socialiste de Kanaky.
PSP	Parti Socialiste Polynésien.
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force.
RAN	Royal Australian Navy.
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force.
RNZN	Royal New Zealand Navy.
RCMP	Rassemblement Calédonien pour la Majorité Présidentielle.
RDPT	Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Tahitien.
RFO	Radio-France Outre-Mer.
RNZAF	Royal New Zealand Air Force.
RPCR	Rassemblement Pour la Calédonie dans la République.
RPR	Rassemblement Pour la République.
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organisation.
SMSP	Société Minière du Pacifique Sud.
SPC	South Pacific Commission.
SPPC	South Pacific Permanent Commission.
TF1	Télévision-France 1.
TOM	Territoire d'Outre-Mer.
UC	Union Calédonienne.
UDC	Union Du Centre.
UDF	Union pour la Démocratie Française.
UMP	Union of Moderate Parties.
UN	United Nations.
UO	Union Océanienne.
UPL	Union Populaire Locale.
UPM	Union Progressiste Mélanésienne.
USP	University of the South Pacific.
USTKE	Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Kanaks et Exploités.
UTD-UNR	Union Tahitienne Démocratique-Union de la Nouvelle République.
VP	Vanuaaku Pati.
Vt	Vatu.
\$A	Australian dollar.
\$F	Fijian dollar.
\$NZ	New Zealand dollar.
\$S	Solomon Islands dollar.
\$T	Tongan dollar.
\$US	United States dollar.

Terms and Conventions

Autonomy

Although normally understood as synonymous with 'independence', 'autonomy' is used in a narrower sense in this work. In the French Polynesian political context since the 1970s, 'autonomy' has come to imply a form of territorial self-government within the French Republic.

Caldoche

Generally, a French citizen of European origin born in New Caledonia or, more rarely, a French citizen born in metropolitan France or in French Algeria who has been assimilated into New Caledonian society.

Demi

A French Polynesian of mixed ethnic origin.

Départements d'Outre-Mer-Territoires d'Outre-Mer

France's Overseas Departments and Territories. This is the official term used to designate French possessions in the Caribbean, and in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. The expression DOM-TOM is understood to include French possessions which are neither Territories nor Departments: for example Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, and Mayotte, which are Territorial Collectivities; Clipperton, which is a Public State Domain; and Tromelin, the Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Bassas da India and Europa, islands with no particular statute. Corsica is considered by French administrators to be a part of mainland France, even though it is a Department separated from metropolitan France by a stretch of the Mediterranean.

Département d'Outre-Mer

French Overseas Department. The Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, Guyane in South America, and Réunion in the Indian Ocean are all DOM. They are administered broadly according to the same laws as mainland French Departments.

Franc de la Communauté Financière du Pacifique

Pacific Financial Community Franc. Commonly referred to herein as the French Pacific Franc. FCFP has been described by various French sources as meaning "Franc des Colonies Françaises du Pacifique", "Change du Franc Pacifique" and "Cours Français du Pacifique". "Franc de la Communauté Financière du Pacifique" is the official designation used by the IEOM, the French body responsible for the circulation of currency in the DOM-TOM. The French Pacific Franc is also inaccurately called the "Central Pacific Franc" in Australia and New Zealand.

Kanak

A contentious word, used increasingly in French since the 1970s to describe those of New Caledonia's Melanesian inhabitants who support independence. This form of the word is rejected by many New Caledonians who do not support independence, and by French language purists, who prefer the Gallicised spelling *Canaque*. This version is in turn derived from the Polynesian word 'Kanaka', used by Europeans in the nineteenth century to describe Melanesians. 'Canaque' was rejected by Melanesian nationalists because it was perceived as being inauthentic. 'Kanak' is, in turn, disliked by many French political and linguistic conservatives for its pro-independence overtones, and due to the supposed ugliness of the letter 'k', which is seldom used in French. 'Kanak' is used invariably in its adjectival form by many supporters of New Caledonian independence. During the 1980s, 'Kanak' also became widely used

in the English-speaking South Pacific. In this thesis, the term 'Kanak' is used specifically to describe pro-independence Melanesians in New Caledonia. For grammatical reasons, it is not used invariably.

Maohi

The traditional name for the rural indigenous inhabitants of what became French Polynesia. Nationalists in French Polynesia call themselves Maohis as an expression of indigenous identity in preference to 'Polynesian'. 'Maohi' is used in this work to denote those French Polynesians who advocate independence.

Melanesian names

These can be a source of confusion. Various French and English language sources sometimes use different spellings for the names of prominent figures in the Kanak nationalist movement. To confuse the matter further, French language sources use accents with Melanesian names. These accents are usually omitted in English language texts. Moreover, some French sources use accents for certain Melanesian names while other French sources do not. As Melanesian languages have no written tradition, it is problematic deciding which European renderings of Melanesian names, if any, might be considered correct. When referring to a Melanesian name from New Caledonia, the author employs what appears to be the most commonly used French variant of that name, and retains French accent marks. The removal of such accent marks might otherwise render the pronunciation of the name in question even less accurate than the French version. When referring to Melanesian names from countries where English is the official language, no accent marks are employed. With names from Vanuatu, where both French and English are official languages, the spelling most prevalent among English language sources is used.

Méto

A mainland French citizen living in a Pacific TOM.

Métropole

Mainland France, as opposed to the DOM-TOM. Hence, metropolitan.

Moruroa/Mururoa

The atoll where France has conducted the bulk of its nuclear tests since 1966 is the subject of an orthographical debate as well as a political one. In the Tuamotuan Polynesian dialect, the atoll's name is 'Maruroa'. This spelling was superseded in the twentieth century by 'Moruroa', the Tahitian version of the atoll's name. In the 1960s, during the establishment of the French nuclear testing programme, the French military mistakenly attributed the name 'Mururoa' to the atoll. This became the official French spelling, and the version commonly used by other Western governments. This variant is rejected by Tahitians and anti-nuclear campaigners. The spelling 'Moruroa' is employed in this thesis. 'Moruroa' is described by conflicting sources as meaning "the wide, dark, threatening horizon", "the place of the great secret" and "the long fish trap".

South Pacific

For the purposes of this thesis, the South Pacific is defined as the area bounded by the Equator, Papua New Guinea and Australia, Antarctica, and South America. As an assertion of the particularism of the island micro-states of the region, some writers define the South Pacific as an area excluding Australia and New Zealand. Due to the important role Australia and New Zealand have played in South Pacific politics, this thesis includes them in the region. The zone is not however considered to encompass those South American states bordering the Pacific, whose relations with the South Pacific remain marginal, and whose relations with France should be considered in a Latin American context.

Likewise, Antarctica is not considered to be a part of the South Pacific due to its different geographical and political situation.

Territoire d'Outre-Mer

French Overseas Territory. France's four TOM are New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia and the French Austral and Antarctic Lands. Unlike French Departments, they are governed according to their own statutes, and have greater administrative autonomy.

Wallisian

Except in certain instances where specific contrasts are drawn between Wallisians and Futunans, 'Wallisian' is usually inclusive of Futunans as well. For the sake of brevity the text refers mainly to 'Wallisians' rather than to 'Wallisians and Futunans'.

Introduction

La France y a été longtemps perçue, de manière largement tendancieuse il est vrai, comme un Etat passéiste, peu soucieux de spécificités et cultures locales, désireux de maintenir coûte que coûte une souveraineté de type post-colonial sur ses territoires et imposant à la région son arrogance nucléaire.

Louis Le Pensec, Minister of the DOM-TOM (1988 to 1993).¹

France's maintenance of its South Pacific presence into the 1980s has not always been regarded with enthusiasm by the newly independent island states in the region. Continued support by the Fifth Republic for its South Pacific territories stood in marked contrast to the policy implemented in the 1970s by its traditional colonial rival, Great Britain. The British decision to withdraw from the bulk of its territories east of Suez involved the granting of independence in the 1970s to all but the most insignificant of its South Pacific dominions, Pitcairn Island. The dénouement of the British withdrawal came in 1980, when the contrasting policies of France and Britain stood out during the troubled decolonisation of the Franco-British Condominium of the New Hebrides. French reluctance to abandon interests in the archipelago caused antagonism, both with the British, and among the emerging indigenous political class.² While Great Britain was concerned with reducing its global role in order to concentrate on domestic problems, France wished to retain its interests in this distant group of islands. Paris's will to do so after the declaration of Vanuatu's independence in July 1980, and in the face of hostility from VP Governments, is evidence of a level of interest in the South Pacific that has since diminished in Whitehall.

Certain aspects of the French presence in the South Pacific have been regarded with misgivings by regional governments. New Caledonia's continued status as a TOM in the face of indigenous nationalist demands for decolonisation during the 1980s appeared anachronistic. Most South Pacific governments mobilised from the mid-1980s to support New Caledonian independence, issuing statements to the effect that the territory's decolonisation had been postponed too long. Following British decolonisation of the South Pacific, French withdrawal from New Caledonia was assumed by regional governments to be an historical inevitability. Paris insisted that the question of New Caledonia's administrative status was a domestic policy matter which had to be resolved within the constitutional framework of the Fifth Republic. This stance was looked on with a mixture of apprehension and contempt by many regional leaders. In the mid-1980s, the representatives of neighbouring countries such as Australia, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands acted on the assumption that they had every right to comment on New Caledonia's internal politics and to voice support for territorial sovereignty. The territory's political stability or lack thereof impinged, they argued, on considerations of regional security.

South Pacific opposition to nuclear testing in French Polynesia is of less recent origin. The first regional protests began three years before French nuclear tests commenced in French Polynesia in 1966.³ France's affirmation of the legality of conducting its nuclear tests on French territory was seen by islanders as arrogant, for the territory in question was situated in the Pacific, and the effects of nuclear tests did not necessarily respect international boundaries. French declarations that the tests represented no threat to island inhabitants or to the environment were received with disbelief. The British and American governments had offered similar assurances concerning the safety of their Pacific nuclear testing in the 1950s. Decades later some of these assurances were proven to be empty and the fallout effects of these tests on island communities left behind a fear of things nuclear among islanders long after these

two nations had abandoned Pacific nuclear testing in 1962.⁴ France's commencement of testing in the Pacific, after Britain and the United States had abandoned it there, was taken as a threatening affront to island populations.

As Le Pensec pointed out, such contentious issues have contributed to the perception among island states that France is living in the past, clinging to policies seen as the products of a European colonialist mentality.

France's defence of its interests in the face of South Pacific critiques has ranged from conciliatory but unbending explanations of government policy through to reactions such as the cutting of ministerial contacts with Australia in January 1987 and the bombing of the Greenpeace vessel *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland Harbour in July 1985. These and other French reactions in the 1980s provoked further discord with South Pacific nations, contributing to a climate of distrust of French motives. Even France's more placid activities, such as its development of aid to the South Pacific, have on occasion become the subject of political debate. The reduction of French aid to Vanuatu was used periodically in an attempt to soften criticisms in Port Vila of French policies. France's aid and development loans to places such as the Solomon Islands, Fiji, and the Cook Islands were interpreted, erroneously or not, as attempts to sway island opposition to French nuclear testing, and support for New Caledonian independence. The validity of such claims will be examined in chapter 8.

The image of France's role in the South Pacific tends to become distorted when viewed through the prism of regional political interests that emphasise *causes célèbres*.⁵ To gain a better understanding of French policy, this work will be orientated toward a consideration of French Governments' views of the role of the Fifth Republic in the South Pacific from 1981. Particular emphasis will be placed on state policy goals in the zone, and on the political philosophies and debates associated with this policy formulation. Assessment will be made of the extent to which various aspects of government policy in the South Pacific have been implemented from 1981 to 1993. This orientation does not diminish the importance of the controversial subjects of possible New Caledonian independence and of French nuclear testing. It does however, permit a closer examination of the motivations behind, and of the implementation of, a range of French policies during the period under discussion. South Pacific responses to France's actions in the region have tended to ignore or misunderstand the influence of determining factors in its policy such as the constitutional framework of the Fifth Republic, the political ideologies of governing parties in Paris, those parties' dealings with the territorial leaders of the French Pacific, not to mention the metropolitan French electorate's ignorance of, and indifference to, this distant area.

Immediate mention here is restricted to just two examples of South Pacific misconceptions relating to French policy in the zone. Many South Pacific governments in the 1980s held that New Caledonian independence was impending, while exhibiting little perception of a major reason as to why it should not be: the constitutional practice of the Fifth Republic allowed the granting of sovereignty to a French territory only when a majority of voters there had expressed support for self-determination. During the 1980s the nationalist movement in New Caledonia did not command the support of a majority of the local electorate. Socialist Governments in Paris were constrained to realise that the majority of the New Caledonian electorate opposed independence. Socialist leaders were bound to the rules of French constitutional law, however much some among them might have sympathised with Melanesian nationalist aspirations. This political constraint was either ignored or misread by neighbouring countries which supported New Caledonia's decolonisation. Irrespective of formal democratic considerations, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea backed independence claims in New Caledonia due to a shared belief in Melanesian nationalism. In the 1980s the Australian Labor Government expressed support for steps toward New Caledonian self-determination "according to the wishes of the people of New Caledonia"⁶ when,

paradoxically, the majority of the New Caledonian electorate opposed independence.

Similarly, after the establishment of a French Socialist Government in 1981, regional political leaders misread its attitude toward nuclear deterrence. Some, holding the erroneous assumption that the mainstream French Left shared the widespread anti-nuclear sentiments professed by Labour parties in the South Pacific, assumed in 1981 that the new administration opposed nuclear testing.⁷ However François Mitterrand, the first Socialist President of the Fifth Republic, was elected in May 1981 on a political platform which included support for the maintenance of France's nuclear deterrent.⁸ He had in fact advocated some form of French nuclear deterrent as early as 1971.⁹ The gap between the perceptions of South Pacific political representatives and the realities of the French political scene could at times be quite marked.

Other misconceptions also existed. This work, with its emphasis on the French view of France's regional involvement, aims in part to dispel these misconceptions, while in the process permitting a greater understanding of various idiosyncrasies revealed by French policy makers in the period under examination.

The starting point of 1981 has been chosen for this study because it was the year of the accession to power of the Fifth Republic's first Socialist Government. It will be seen that during Mitterrand's two terms of office since then, the South Pacific impinged on metropolitan French political life to a greater extent than previously. The decolonisation of the New Hebrides stimulated the realisation in Paris that French interests in the South Pacific were not immune to pressures for change. Before the 1980s, the South Pacific had appeared from Paris to be a zone of political inertia compared with areas such as Indo-China and Africa, where France had been forced to decolonise in the 1950s and 1960s when faced with the rise of indigenous nationalist movements. The installation of a reformist Socialist Government, combined with the perceived precedent of New Hebridean decolonisation, raised the hopes of New Caledonia's Melanesian nationalists. By the middle of the 1980s, the possibility of New Caledonian independence had been propelled to the forefront of metropolitan French political debate. This was the first time that decolonisation matters had assumed such importance in Paris since the French withdrawal from Algeria in 1962. While the continuation of nuclear testing in French Polynesia was never placed in question by Mitterrand in the 1980s, France's resolve to protect its testing programme from possible foreign disruption, to the extent of sinking the *Rainbow Warrior*, provoked one of the major domestic political scandals of the decade. The advent of these problems coincided with a growing realisation among French Ministers that the Fifth Republic had hitherto neglected its interests in the Pacific in favour of concentrating on areas of greater French influence in Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

The extent to which French Governments responded to South Pacific issues since 1981, and the forms that their responses assumed, comprise the overall concern of this work. Analysis is offered of the administration of the three Pacific TOM (New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia), and of external relations with South Pacific nations. The interplay between French domestic policy and external policy in the area is considerable: an examination of the former contributes to an understanding of the latter and vice-versa. The responses of neighbouring countries to political developments within France's Pacific territories cannot be assessed adequately without some prior analysis of those developments themselves. Furthermore, as much as Paris might have wished the exclusion of foreign critiques and lobbying over its policies in the TOM, debate over New Caledonia and French Polynesia became international. New Caledonia was the subject of concerted lobbying by the South Pacific Forum in the UN from 1986. Similar lobbying on French nuclear testing dates back to the 1960s.

Part 1 of this thesis concentrates on France's political relationship with its South Pacific territories since 1981. After an introductory chapter on the state of government policy relating to the French Pacific in the months preceding Mitterrand's election, a chapter each is devoted to New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia. These chapters concentrate on the various administrative and development problems that those three territories presented to French Governments.

Part 2 examines France's external relations with South Pacific nations from 1981. The opening chapter of part 2 consists of an introduction to French perceptions of the South Pacific and a survey of regional French diplomacy. The following three chapters consider the influence of nuclear and decolonisation issues on France's presence in the South Pacific, and the increasingly important role French aid and co-operation have played in expanding French regional integration. A thematic approach is used in part 2. A case-by-case study of French associations with all seventeen foreign territories in the South Pacific is not the intention of this work, even assuming that there is a great deal to be said about French contacts with places such as Pitcairn Island or Easter Island. Nevertheless most of the South Pacific island states, from larger ones such as Fiji to the smallest ones, have their links with France considered to some degree in part 2.

The conclusion presents an assessment of the implementation of French internal and external policy in the South Pacific since 1981. An assessment is made of the extent to which France has achieved its policy goals under Mitterrand's presidency.

Some mention must be made of the sources drawn on in the preparation of this thesis, of their biases, and of the extent of their reliability. Material consulted includes documents which are predominantly of French and South Pacific origin: government statements, statistics, reports and parliamentary papers, academic works, partisan political publications, and journalism. Some of these sources are more reliable than others. For instance, press reports of events discussed within this work sometimes contain factual errors and contradictions, misspelt names, and misleading conclusions. In some instances, press reports are the only references to certain events to which access is to date possible. The contemporary and thus still sensitive nature of many aspects of the topic under discussion has precluded examination of government archives taken for granted by scholars researching the more distant past.

In mentioning the subjective nature of sources, ideological and nationalistic influences should not be ignored. As will be seen, many of the individuals quoted in this work have resorted to dubious claims while under these influences. A not inconsiderable amount of the literature concerning France's South Pacific presence in the 1980s has been detrimentally influenced by chauvinism and ideological dogmatism, accentuated by the mutual incomprehension sometimes evident between France and the Anglophone South Pacific. Caution must be exercised when dealing with such material, although it can be useful for illustrating divergent positions and conflicting interpretations of political questions.

Another limitation of accounts about France and the South Pacific, is that in them the controversial has often overshadowed the commonplace. There exists a more abundant literature on the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing than on French development aid to the South Pacific.¹⁰ Similarly, New Caledonia's turbulent politics in the 1980s prompted the publication of more books than have been devoted to French Polynesia's comparatively placid political evolution.¹¹ Such subject biases to be found in the existing literature on France in the South Pacific during the 1980s can be a hindrance, channelling attention toward sensational episodes rather than toward the durable and substantial developments of the period. In this study, certain key flashpoints must of necessity be discussed. Adequate analysis of Franco-New Zealand relations in the 1980s could not be made while ignoring the Greenpeace affair. But rather

than dwelling on the minutiae of incidents such as the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, emphasis here will be on the policy context of these events and on their wider implications. Rather than recapitulating journalistic exposés, this study concentrates on the evolution of French government policy and its implementation in the South Pacific since 1981.

Nevertheless, some assessments made in this text may be considered debatable. Judging from the impassioned nature of much preceding argumentation involving aspects of this topic, such a response is to be expected. While this study endeavours to present a balanced view of its subject, some of its conclusions will prompt disagreement. This work's conclusions are, of course, the author's own.

Notes

¹ Louis Le Pensec: "Les DOM-TOM dans leur environnement régional" in *L'Afrique et l'Asie modernes* no.164 printemps 1990, p.11.

² See John Beasant: *The Santo Rebellion: an imperial reckoning*; Walter Lini: *Beyond Pandemonium: from the New Hebrides to Vanuatu*.

³ For a history of South Pacific opposition to French nuclear testing in the 1960s and 1970s, see Stephen Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France: a study in inter-state relations* chs.1, 3. Regional opposition to French nuclear testing in the 1980s is considered in more detail in chapter 6 of this work.

⁴ For an account of United States and British nuclear testing in the Pacific, see Jane Dibblin: *Day of Two Suns: US nuclear testing and the Pacific islanders*.

⁵ David Robie: *Blood on their Banner. Nationalist Struggles in the South Pacific* and Greenpeace New Zealand: *Chronology: the French presence in the South Pacific 1838-1990* are just two examples of this tendency, being books which focus on the issues of New Caledonian independence and French nuclear testing from an anti-nuclear and pro-independence viewpoint.

⁶ Bill Hayden, Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, in *Australian Foreign Affairs Review* May 1983 p.186. Cf. *ibid.* July 1983 p.375, October 1984 p.1086. Cf. chapter 7 for further information on Australia's stance toward New Caledonia.

⁷ For example, in Papua New Guinea, the Trade Union Congress was delighted with the arrival of a French Socialist Government because it thought the new administration would be anti-nuclear. The Congress displayed dismay and anger when the administration's pro-nuclear stance later became apparent: *PNG Post-Courier* 6 January 1982. Likewise, the PNG Government expressed its hope that Mitterrand would respond to South Pacific nations' demands for an end to French nuclear testing: *ibid.* 12 May 1981. Three years later, such misconceptions still persisted in high quarters. On 5 November 1984, David Lange, then Prime Minister of New Zealand, claimed mistakenly that in continuing nuclear testing the Socialist Government was carrying out a nuclear policy different from the platform the PS had campaigned on in 1981: *The Press* 6 November 1984.

⁸ See the "110 propositions pour la France" in François Mitterrand: *Politique 2. 1977-1981* p.324.

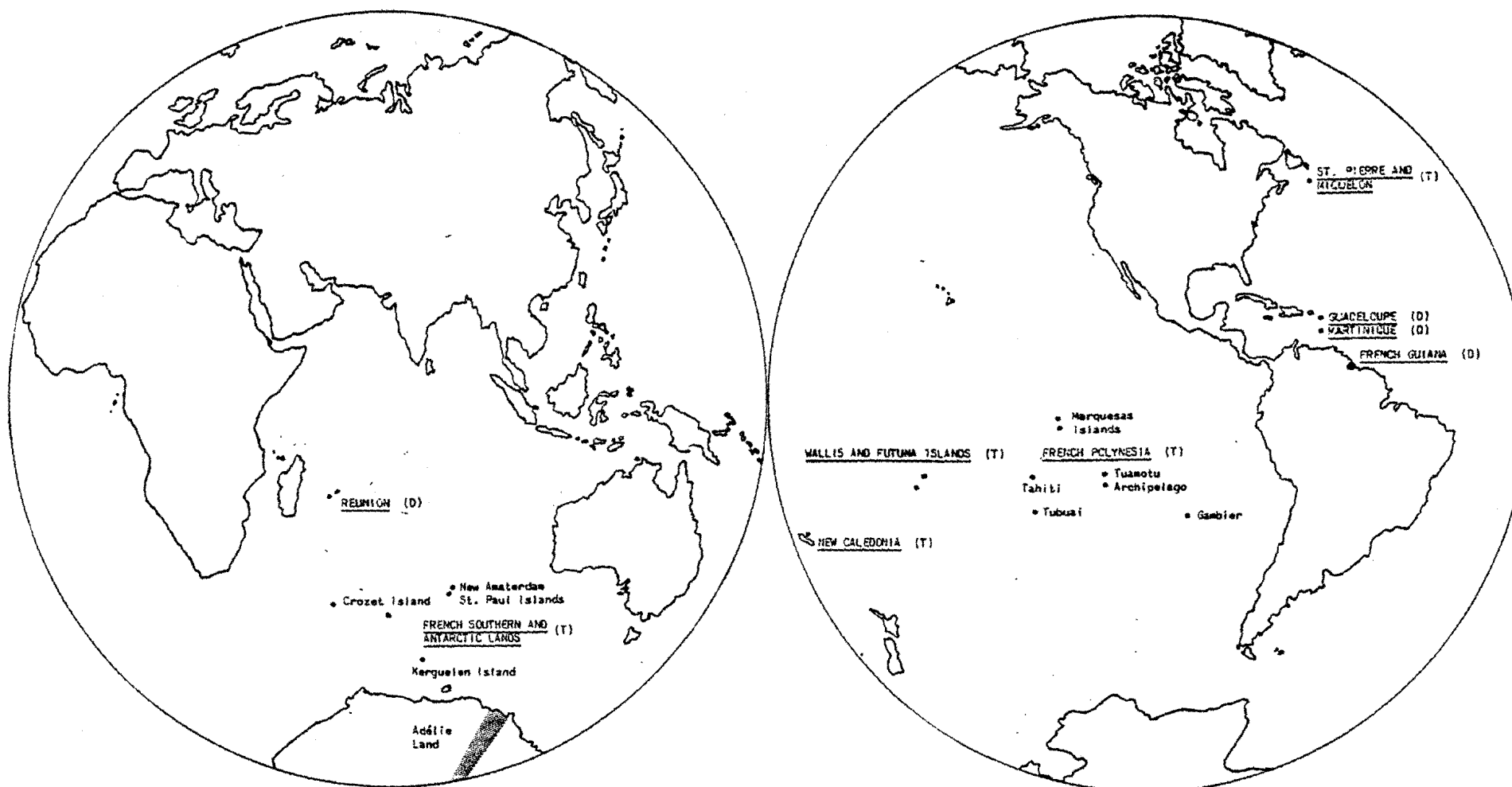
⁹ Catherine Nay: *Les Sept Mitterrand* p.189.

¹⁰ The *Rainbow Warrior* bombing has been the main subject of twelve books and far more in part: see the bibliography. Hundreds of articles have been written about this subject since 1985. French development aid in the South Pacific has yet to receive such extensive coverage.

¹¹ More than 25 books written specifically about New Caledonia's political problems have been published since 1981. Fewer books concentrating on French Polynesian political issues have been published since that date: see the bibliography. Wallis and Futuna is the most poorly served of the three French South Pacific territories. No books with that territory's politics as their main subject were published in the period under discussion.

Part 1
The French Pacific Territories since 1981

Map 1: France's Overseas Departments and Territories



Source: Ambassade de France à Londres: *France Overseas. Administrative Organisation and Economic Evolution* pp.12-13.

1. Prelude. 1980: the View from Paris

A Quiet Year

In political terms, 1980 was largely uneventful for France's three South Pacific TOM. No major new force for change there emanated either from Paris, or from the territories themselves. This situation contrasted sharply with the years preceding and following 1980. For instance in 1979 a new territorial administration had been appointed in New Caledonia and the Kanak nationalist FI had been founded there, while 1981 marked the advent of the first French Socialist Government since the 1950s.

By 1980, six years had passed since the election of President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Since 1974 the liberal-conservative Governments appointed in Paris by Giscard d'Estaing had maintained their majority in Parliament in spite of internal Gaullist dissent and electoral challenges from the two major parties of the French Left, the PS and the PC. New Caledonia's redefined territorial statute had been in operation for three years, and the modifications to the French Polynesian statute, promulgated in 1977, were functioning without major problems. The controversy which had accompanied the land, social and economic reforms introduced in New Caledonia since 1978 by Paul Dijoud, the Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, had receded, if not disappeared. Although by the end of 1980 Dijoud's reforms had been implemented, at that stage it was too soon to assess their overall effects.¹ This consideration did not hinder the French Government in judging from its vantage point in Paris that administrative reforms in the Pacific territories were progressing well.²

Within those territories themselves in 1980, no new development of great consequence was timetabled. In New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia, neither territorial nor municipal elections were scheduled to provoke the hurried formation of the multitudinous, fractious parties that usually accompanied these events. The only elections to take place in the territories that year were for the Senators for Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia. Their results, on 28 September, represented a victory for political continuity. In Wallis and Futuna Sosefo Papilio, a representative for the conservative RPR, received the votes necessary for the renewal of his term in office for a further nine years.³ In doing so, he bolstered the dominant role that local Gaullists had held in the territorial administration since the early 1960s. In French Polynesia Daniel Millaud, a representative of the Giscardian UDF, was also re-elected.⁴

In 1980 the French Government was more preoccupied with events unfolding in the Franco-British Condominium of the New Hebrides than with the Pacific TOM. Fearful speculation asserted that the decolonisation of the New Hebrides might start a 'domino effect', that would somehow encourage the rise of Kanak nationalism in New Caledonia.⁵ However, this argument ignored the different political situations in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. The former's nascent Kanak nationalist movement had yet to attain the electoral strength of the New Hebridean VP. In 1980, secession from the French Republic represented an issue of prime importance for only a small minority in French Polynesia. Secession did not constitute an issue at all in Wallis and Futuna, where the desirability of links with France was almost unanimously affirmed. France's recognition of the independence of two East African TOM, the Comoros in 1975 and of Djibouti in 1977, were events held by French Governments under the presidency of Giscard d'Estaing to have no consequence for the Pacific TOM. The potential of the Comoros and Djibouti as 'dominoes' whose attainment of sovereignty might set a precedent for the French Pacific was assumed to be negated by their distance.⁶

The Eighth Plan

Independence was not a question contemplated in metropolitan administrative planning for the French Pacific in 1980, at least not in the political sense. The encouragement of economic independence there was however deemed desirable by state planners in Paris. While it was held to be desirable to maintain sovereignty over the components of the DOM-TOM, it was also considered preferable that they become lighter financial burdens for the French State. Published by the General Planning Commission in July 1980, the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM considered the lack of financial self-reliance of the Pacific TOM, and of the DOM-TOM in general, as a troublesome concern which needed to be addressed.⁷ Scheduled for implementation between 1980 and 1985, the Plan declared that the economies of the Pacific TOM, like those of the DOM, were too dependent on metropolitan France and that greater self-sufficiency should be instilled in them. Deficiencies in the production base of the DOM-TOM had to be overcome if lasting economic development was to take place there:

Le développement de l'appareil productif des D.O.M.-T.O.M. doit être l'objectif majeur du VIII^e Plan.

En effet, qu'il s'agisse des départements ou des territoires d'outre-mer, une atténuation de la dépendance de leur économie par rapport aux transferts publics passe par une plus grande contribution des activités locales de production à la création de revenus et d'emplois sur place. Compte tenu du plafonnement des activités traditionnelles, cette contribution suppose une profonde diversification de l'économie grâce à la mise en œuvre d'autres activités agricoles, industrielles, artisanales ou touristiques, ainsi que par l'exploitation des ressources de la forêt et de la mer.

Une telle orientation n'est certes pas nouvelle dans les D.O.M.-T.O.M. Mais les résultats enregistrés jusqu'à présent, bien que non négligeables, sont loin de correspondre aux besoins.⁸

Some critical analysis of the unspoken assumptions underpinning this text should be offered, as certain peculiarities are apparent in it.

The tacit assumption above is that the economic dependence of the DOM-TOM was inherently a bad thing. This had been a long-standing assumption in metropolitan French analysis of the role of the DOM-TOM in the Republic. It was argued that they should transcend the pejorative image of being "les danseuses de la France" or "les confettis de l'Empire",⁹ dependent on financial assistance from Paris, by making a greater productive contribution to the national economy and becoming more self-reliant. On the other hand it might be asked whether this lack of economic independence was necessarily a bad thing for the Republic. If France wished to retain its global possessions, the encouragement of economic self-reliance might be a negative tendency. Were any of the DOM-TOM to become financially self-reliant, greater local demands for political independence could be encouraged. It would be contrary to the national interest if, for example, the establishment of economic independence in French Polynesia were to be followed by the demand of an electoral majority for self-determination. What then would become of the French nuclear testing programme?

Furthermore the metropolitan French preference for the DOM-TOM to become financially less dependent on state subsidies might marginally reduce state expenditure, but it should be asked if this was a realistic goal. Many regions of metropolitan France could not claim to be economically self-reliant. Why should the DOM-TOM be any more capable than them of reaching a state of financial self-support? If the small population and resource bases of the DOM-TOM are taken into consideration their prospects of achieving self-sufficiency do not appear to be great. Bernard Poirine, a French economist, described in 1992 this fixation with berating the lack of self-reliance in the

DOM-TOM as inappropriate. He asked in particular why so much French analysis of the economic situation of French Polynesia should concentrate on the unproductive nature of the territorial economy, and its level of state subsidies. Did not French Polynesia, as host to the French nuclear testing programme, play an economic role comparable to that of any large metropolitan French garrison town?

On ne songerait pas à calculer [...] la balance des échanges d'une ville de garnison métropolitaine avec le reste de la Nation, encore moins à savoir si la contribution de ses habitants aux activités "productives" dans l'agriculture et l'industrie est suffisante pour que cette ville présente les caractères d'une économie "viable", "équilibrée", "productive", "autonome", ou toute autre qualificatif fortement teinté, qu'on le veuille ou non, de jugement de valeur ou d'à priori idéologique et politique. [...] Personne ne songe à penser que les habitants d'une ville de garnison métropolitaine sont "assistés" ou "improductifs" parce qu'il n'y a pas d'usine ou de paysans à cet endroit, mais beaucoup de fournisseurs de services "improductifs" [...].¹⁰

Poirine pointed out that any orientation that stressed that French Polynesia, or the rest of the DOM-TOM, should pay their way, could only be justified from a traditional colonial perspective which assumed that these domains were not an integral part of the Fifth Republic or, for that matter, from an anti-colonialist perspective, on the grounds that economic self-sufficiency constituted one of the prerequisites for independence.¹¹ Whatever the reason, from both constitutional and economic perspectives, it was faulty logic to assume that the DOM-TOM should be anything more than minor, dependent components of a larger national structure.

Official assumptions about development should also be critically scrutinised. Development or progress in the DOM-TOM was assumed by the officials and politicians who prepared the Eighth Plan to be synonymous with the expansion of capitalism there. The creation of new enterprises and the exploitation of natural resources would lead to the creation of jobs and commercial prosperity. This approach was Eurocentric in that it aimed to raise the material standard of living of the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM to a level similar to that of the metropolitan French. The indigenous tribal societies of New Caledonia, French Polynesia and of Wallis and Futuna were considered underdeveloped by the criteria expressed in the Eighth Plan because of the low penetration of European commercial values there, and because of continued tribal reliance on subsistence agriculture. However was it necessarily desirable for indigenous inhabitants of the Pacific TOM to see their traditional societies further eroded by the spread of the cash economy? Those living in the tribal milieu might not enjoy all the material conveniences of twentieth century European consumer societies, but these conveniences were not necessarily desirable if their acceptance involved abandoning communal socio-economic structures for a European society centred on the individual and orientated toward market capitalism. Tribal authorities would argue that such 'development' could break up traditional societies and produce harmful effects on the tribal subsistence economies of the Pacific TOM.¹² The exploitation of natural resources advocated by the Eighth Plan might also have destructive consequences for the environment in tribal domains, disrupting subsistence farming and hunting. The construction of tourist resorts could claim prime agricultural land, and open cast mining could destroy it, while logging could deprive local game of its natural habitat. What was considered 'development' and 'progress' in Paris could be perceived as the exact opposite by the indigenous inhabitants whose traditional lifestyles were touched by this change.

The administrative outlook expressed in the Eighth Plan was not the only criterion which might be applied to the situation of the DOM-TOM, and the official view should not be accepted without question as the sole relevant

approach. Nevertheless, in order to better understand how the DOM-TOM were viewed from Paris, discussion in this work must of necessity follow the frames of reference offered by the Eighth Plan. Whether the document offered a realistic response should be asked. The objective of reducing the economic dependence faced by the DOM-TOM was offered with great verve, although remained easier said than done. The desirability of a diversification of local economic activity had been declared repeatedly in preceding state plans to no great effect.¹³ What remained to be determined was whether the French Government could translate this target into durable results.

In terms of what in Paris was considered to be underdevelopment, the Pacific TOM shared many of the obstacles of the DOM, as well as possessing their own peculiar disadvantages. These disadvantages stemmed largely from the geographical location of the French Pacific. After noting the general dependence of the DOM-TOM on metropolitan France, the Eighth Plan indicated that the Pacific TOM were disadvantaged compared to the DOM because of their greater distance from French markets. This greater distance implied high freight costs for exports from the French Pacific to the mainland, rendering produce uncompetitive. This consideration, and the narrow range of exports from the TOM to their immediate Pacific neighbours, combined to act as a powerful disincentive to the growth of local production through export-led economies.¹⁴ The Eighth Plan stressed the need for the encouragement of commerce in the French Pacific and with its regional neighbours in order to improve export opportunities from the TOM.¹⁵ It was assumed that it would be more profitable to sell products from the French Pacific in the Pacific basin as a result of the relative proximity of potential markets there and the consequently lower freight costs involved.

Diversified export growth from the French Pacific had been mediocre in the late 1970s. Wallis and Futuna's economy remained centred on subsistence agriculture. In New Caledonia and French Polynesia, local agricultural production had failed to meet the greater demands of local consumption stimulated by territorial population growth.¹⁶ The profitability of the only major New Caledonian export, nickel, was, like French Polynesian copra, constantly in flux owing to the instability of these commodities' prices on the international market, although the difference was that, unlike nickel, copra declined steadily.¹⁷

Tourism, at that time the only other major area of economic development for the latter two territories, was noted as not having progressed to as great an extent as in the DOM.¹⁸ For European and American travellers the French Pacific did not represent as convenient a destination as the French Caribbean. The greater distance of the Pacific TOM from Europe and the eastern seaboard of North America, and the higher airfares that resulted for European and American travellers, posed an obstacle to competitiveness with less distant holiday destinations. An increase in revenue from tourism would be dependent on encouraging visitors from the Asia-Pacific region, for whom the French Pacific represented a cheaper destination than it did for Europeans and the inhabitants of the east coast of North America. Much remained to be done in expanding tourism.¹⁹

The EEZs of the French Pacific also offered great potential for economic exploitation although few advances had been made in this field by the end of the 1970s. The Eighth Plan noted that the Pacific territories' fisheries should be exploited beyond the artisanal level then prevalent.²⁰ Once again, commercial growth in this sector was dependent on improving regional trade, as frozen fish shipped from the Pacific TOM could not compete successfully in metropolitan France with the lower market prices of fish from the Atlantic Ocean. As shipping frozen fish to Europe was uneconomic, more profitable export markets had to be found in the Pacific basin.

It was asserted in the Eighth Plan that agricultural activity in the Pacific TOM, as in the Caribbean and other DOM, needed to be increased to the point that production would fulfill the demands of local consumers.²¹ The document expressed the belief that such territorial self-sufficiency would reduce the demand for expensive imported food, shipped from as far away as Europe. The prospect of increasing local food production to the point where meat and vegetables could be exported to markets such as Japan and New Zealand was also optimistically contemplated.²² Barriers to these potential exports were ignored; notably, Japanese tariffs on imports and New Zealand's ability either to produce its own food or to import it more cheaply from places other than the French Pacific.

Reviving agriculture in the Pacific TOM presented a particular challenge. Agriculture in French Polynesia and New Caledonia had declined markedly since the 1960s.²³ In French Polynesia, this decline had been accentuated by the arrival of the nuclear testing programme. The presence of the programme permitted a rapid expansion of tertiary sector employment. Not only were workers required on the test sites, they were needed in Papeete to staff support services for the nuclear programme. Traditional agriculture was abandoned by farmers attracted by the lucrative employment opportunities that the programme created.²⁴ In New Caledonia, the boom in the nickel industry from 1969 to 1972 had likewise accentuated the diminution of agricultural activity to the advantage of more profitable employment in the mining sector. To the contrary, subsistence agriculture in Wallis and Futuna could not be described as declining, but it was unlikely to expand to any great extent for want of more arable land.

With the notable exception of nickel mining in New Caledonia, which dominated the territorial economy, local industry represented another underdeveloped sector in the French Pacific. The Eighth Plan advocated the creation of light industry and small artisanal enterprises.²⁵ The growth of these businesses would serve to diversify local economies and create employment opportunities. Evolution in the industrial sector, as with tourism, fisheries and agriculture, would be encouraged through government loans and subsidies. Competition from imported goods would be discouraged by tariffs.²⁶ What effect import tariffs might have in discouraging trade between the Pacific territories and their neighbours was not discussed.

One major obstacle to economic diversification in the Pacific TOM was purely internal. The Eighth Plan described the distorting and stifling effect that the presence of a well-paid civil service had on private sector growth in the DOM-TOM. The gap between public sector salaries, and the lower incomes private sector workers received, acted as a major barrier to entrepreneurial growth.²⁷ Local inhabitants, it was argued, were less likely to start their own businesses when better paid employment was offered in civil service posts. Locals were also less likely to be promoted to major administrative positions than the generally better qualified metropolitan French citizens who dominated this sector. The presence of metropolitan civil servants served both to undermine the growth of entrepreneurial activities in the Pacific TOM, and obstructed locals seeking to obtain high-ranking positions in the territorial bureaucracy.

It was proposed that public sector salaries should be reduced to make this employment less attractive.²⁸ However, lowered salaries would not reduce the size of administrative bodies in the DOM-TOM. With or without salary reductions, civil service posts would remain attractive to locals for the career stability they offered. Taking into account the added public sector work implied under the Eighth Plan by projected government development programmes that were advocated, it was unlikely that the preponderance of civil service posts would diminish in years to come. Whether lasting local economic growth and entrepreneurial initiatives could be built on the basis of a plan directed from Paris was a complicated question which was left unanswered.

A lack of educational qualifications, particularly in management and commerce, disadvantaged the majority of the inhabitants of the French Pacific. The Eighth Plan mentioned that education in the Pacific TOM was lagging

behind the general educational standards of the DOM, which were themselves recognised as being lower than those of metropolitan France.²⁹ The number of people who had received secondary school education in French Polynesia was particularly low.³⁰ In Wallis and Futuna, there existed a significant number of adults who had not progressed beyond primary school level.³¹ The educational disadvantages of the inhabitants of the French Pacific prevented most of them from obtaining public service work. Private sector opportunities that would enable unqualified workers to shape their own careers were limited. Unemployment in the Pacific TOM was aggravated by high local birth rates. Every year, more school leavers arrived on the employment market than there were jobs on offer. Simply put, population increase in the Pacific TOM was outstripping territorial occupational growth, an employment problem France was also experiencing on a national level.³² The Eighth Plan detailed the importance of educating more locals to a higher level than was prevalent. The inhabitants of the French Pacific would need to be offered wider educational opportunities, including vocational training and better access to tertiary education.

After summarising all these difficulties, the Eighth Plan concluded on an optimistic note. It was stated that for all the drawbacks still facing the DOM-TOM, living standards there had improved during the 1970s thanks to reforms undertaken by the State. Perhaps, it was suggested, this improvement was the very reason for the dissatisfactions and rising aspirations of the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM:

[...] en raison même de ce progrès, les populations d'outre-mer aspirent désormais à un modèle de vie qui implique que le développement soit tourné résolument vers le monde moderne.

[...] en raison des faibles capacités contributives locales, le développement a été surtout le fait de la métropole. Mais les données ont changé outre-mer: après 35 ans d'une évolution en profondeur des structures économiques et sociales, il est désormais possible, voire indispensable, d'envisager aujourd'hui une plus grande participation des populations locales à leur propre développement.

[...] Et les actions que le Plan propose n'ont de sens que dans la mesure où elles contribuent à donner aux populations concernées les conditions de leur bonheur, de leur épanouissement et de leur plénitude.³³

As presented here, the changes implemented during the presidency of Giscard d'Estaing formed a continuation of broader development trends undertaken in the DOM-TOM since the end of World War II. Under Giscard d'Estaing, the French Government recognised the importance of consulting with the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM to some extent in the formulation of administrative schemes. None the less, the impetus for change, and the direction that change would take, would continue to be determined in Paris. Consultation with local leaders did not equate with relinquishing control of funding or policy formulation. Whether this choice was preferable to decentralisation was to be partially tested with the granting under Mitterrand of greater autonomy to the DOM-TOM in the 1980s. What conclusions might be drawn from this process in the Pacific TOM will be considered in the following chapters of part 1.

The important emphasis in the conclusion of the Eighth Plan was that the French Republic was continuing to promote modernity and social change in the DOM-TOM through the execution of benevolent reforms which promised greater happiness to their fortunate recipients. No hint was offered in the document's text that the shape and direction of government reform in the DOM-TOM might not have been to the liking of some of its inhabitants. For the leaders of the FI, the prospect of New Caledonia remaining under French administration appeared stifling for Kanak aspirations to self-determination. In French Polynesia, supporters of the minority Maohi nationalist parties asserted that in some respects the living standards of Polynesians had deteriorated since World War II. Far from being benevolent, post-war change resulting from the

establishment of the nuclear testing programme in French Polynesia had, they argued, impacted negatively on the territory's economy and inhabitants.³⁴ The Eighth Plan did not venture so far as to question the very presence or structure of French administration in the DOM-TOM, and could not really be expected to do so, but preferred instead to suggest that some adjustments of existing structures might serve to solve remaining problems.

Parliamentary Debate

The reference to Republican continuity in the conclusion to the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM echoed words that Dijoud had offered in the National Assembly on 10 June 1980. In a debate on the DOM-TOM, he declared that "le Gouvernement poursuit activement et résolument dans l'outre-mer l'œuvre qui a été accomplie par la Ve République depuis plus de vingt ans".³⁵ Within this broad framework, it was suggested, all was proceeding well in the French Pacific. René de Branche, the UDF spokesman, offered this positive balance sheet of government achievements there:

En Nouvelle-Calédonie, le nouveau statut voté en 1976 a reçu une très large approbation de la population et fonctionne de manière satisfaisante. Une majorité homogène et constructive travaille en collaboration avec l'administration, à la réalisation du plan de développement à long terme qui est devenu la charte de ce territoire. L'époque, pourtant récente, où nous assistions au déchaînement des passions, au jeu irresponsable de certains partis et où l'angoisse régnait face à un avenir incertain, est déjà oubliée. C'est un beau succès à porter à l'actif du Gouvernement, de la majorité et du Secrétaire d'Etat chargé de ces territoires.

En Polynésie française, l'U.D.F. estime que le statut actuel du territoire est le meilleur cadre institutionnel possible. Le président de l'assemblée territoriale et le vice-président du Gouvernement ont d'ailleurs constaté récemment que ce statut avait largement permis à l'Etat et au territoire de travailler conjointement au développement économique et social.[...]

Dans les territoires d'outre-mer, comme dans les départements d'outre-mer et en métropole, l'U.D.F. veut construire une société plus juste et plus fraternelle.³⁶

De Branche's words exhibit an unabashed optimism for the future stability of New Caledonia and French Polynesia that events later in the 1980s and in the 1990s were to overshadow.³⁷ The optimism characteristic of Dijoud, de Branche and of other UDF members in the Government, was shared neither by their Gaullist colleagues in the RPR, nor by representatives of the Left during this National Assembly debate.

Although the speakers in the debate tended to generalise indiscriminately about the differing situations faced by the various components of the DOM-TOM, the discussion provides a useful starting point for an examination of French party policy concerning the French Pacific in the 1980s. To what extent the stances of the PS, PC, RPR and UDF later contradicted or affirmed the generalised observations offered by their representatives in this debate will be highlighted in the three following chapters.³⁸

The DOM-TOM debate provided evidence of growing differences between RPR and UDF members of the majority in the National Assembly. Bernard Pons, the Secretary-General of the RPR, made an effort to disassociate his party from government reforms. Pons thereby implicitly rejected Dijoud's statement affirming government policy continuity in relation to its Fifth Republic antecedents.³⁹ After presenting a tribute to Gaullist DOM-TOM administration under the Fifth Republic,⁴⁰ Pons expressed the fundamental position of the RPR: continued links with the DOM-TOM represented "un élément essentiel de la dignité et du rayonnement français". He added that the party had "une autre politique" from that practised by Dijoud:

Chacun pourra se rendre compte que cette politique forme un tout cohérent: par l'ensemble des aspects économiques, financiers, fiscaux, sociaux et culturels qu'elle recouvre; par la méthode, celle de la décentralisation.

Notre premier objectif est de lever les obstacles au développement et à l'aménagement du territoire. Notre volonté est de restaurer une confiance que trop d'incertitudes et, je le répète, trop d'erreurs, ont contribués à entamer dangereusement.⁴¹

In what way his policy might differ from that of Dijoud was difficult to ascertain. Pons would not have the opportunity to test his capacity to restore confidence in the DOM-TOM until March 1986, when he was appointed Minister to the DOM-TOM. To what extent he achieved decentralisation in the Pacific TOM during his two years as Minister will be considered in more detail in chapters 2, 3 and 4.

It was clear that the loss of confidence, uncertainties, and errors referred to by Pons was the supposed responsibility of UDF Ministers. Dijoud riposted by saying that the RPR too had been part of the Government under Giscard d'Estaing's presidency. If any blame deserved to be apportioned, some must belong to the RPR.⁴² Pons appeared to be making the most of the debate on the DOM-TOM in order to steer the RPR out of association with the UDF in this policy area. It was a manoeuvre repeated by other RPR Deputies in various areas of debate during the months preceding the presidential elections in 1981. For Jacques Chirac, the RPR leader, to compete successfully against Giscard d'Estaing's candidature in those elections, a platform of consensual agreement with the UDF was the least desirable basis upon which to run a campaign. An examination of the extent to which differences really existed between the RPR and the UDF over DOM-TOM policy in the late 1970s lies outside the scope of this work. But, as will be seen, this was not to be the last occasion when rhetoric driven by electoral considerations outweighed a more disinterested appreciation of the situation in the DOM-TOM.

PS Deputies who spoke during the debate were also hostile to the optimistic pronouncements of the UDF representatives. They did however largely concur with the terms in which the Eighth Plan described the economic disadvantages of the DOM-TOM. Joseph Franceschi, the PS spokesman, summarised these problems in much the same manner as the Eighth Plan did, albeit in a less neutral and guarded tone, as befits an opposition representative. He mentioned the overwhelming of traditional agriculture and small businesses in the DOM-TOM by an inflated tertiary sector.⁴³ He described how the cycle of rural migration linked to declining agricultural production, and expanding urban unemployment, was related to the collapse of local production. While agreeing with government analysis of the troubles of the DOM-TOM, Franceschi criticised government attempts to solve these difficulties. Unlike UDF representatives, Franceschi wondered aloud whether the aforementioned problems could be resolved. He questioned whether the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM would ever attain the living standards of metropolitan France and contended that government initiatives in the DOM-TOM had failed:

Malgré de gros moyens en hommes qualifiés, en capitaux et en soutiens politiques, l'action gouvernementale a globalement échoué dans l'outre-mer français. Elle est en effet inadaptée et ne s'attaque pas aux causes. [...]

Certes, elle a permis d'obtenir un certain nombre de résultats positifs que l'objectivité commande de ne pas méconnaître: on y assiste effectivement à une certaine croissance économique, même si la modernisation s'accompagne de l'élimination des petits producteurs; il est vrai que le niveau de vie moyen augmente, même si, en l'occurrence, la moyenne ne veut rien dire tellement elle masque une dispersion des revenus; et il faut reconnaître qu'il existe dans les départements et territoires d'outre-mer une bonne infrastructure tant scolaire que sanitaire, sociale et économique. Mais, même si des éléments ne sont pas

*négatifs, combien le réquisitoire est-il accablant, tant l'échec est patent, la situation étant grave et les problèmes fondamentaux laissés sans solution aussi bien dans le domaine économique que dans les secteurs social et culturel!*⁴⁴

These lucid observations were to remain valid while PS representatives were in government during the 1980s and early 1990s.

For the PS in 1980, reform in the DOM-TOM needed to advance beyond administrative tinkering of the sort envisaged by the Government. Franceschi talked of how it was necessary to eradicate the last vestiges of colonialism.⁴⁵ He added that "une nouvelle politique économique, sociale et culturelle est à préconiser, sans oublier qu'il faut rendre la parole aux intéressés".⁴⁶ The reforms that he deemed necessary to achieve this goal did not however differ substantially from the orientation of the Eighth Plan. Neither did his recognition of the importance of consulting the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM. In almost Giscardian terms, Franceschi emphasised the importance of regional development, as well as job creation, centred on an expansion of commercial agriculture, manufacturing and tourism.⁴⁷ Only rhetorical differences existed between the PS reform proposals he described and government initiatives already under way. He mentioned, for example, the need for "une véritable réforme agraire" in the DOM-TOM, displaying the tacit assumption that Dijoud's agrarian reforms in New Caledonia and elsewhere were somehow less than authentic. Franceschi's employment of some Marxian class analysis of social differences in the DOM-TOM also distinguished the PS from the liberal strand in the Government's outlook. He aligned the PS on the side of the oppressed in their struggle against "les exploités",⁴⁸ although this proclamation represented evidence more of the differing ideological cultures of the UDF and the PS than of differing policy goals.

The majority of the comments uttered by Franceschi neither constituted startling policy initiatives nor offered new insights. For instance, on the question of the possible independence of one or more of the DOM-TOM, he stated:

*Si une majorité authentique, notamment dans les territoires d'outre-mer, réclame l'indépendance, il faut la lui donner sans délai. Mais la grande majorité de la population, surtout dans les départements d'outre-mer, se déclare toujours française. Il faut tenir compte de cette volonté et de cet état de fait.*⁴⁹

These and other words prompted a cry of "Très bien!" from Roch Pidjot, the sole FI parliamentary representative, but it is difficult to see in what respect the position of the PS differed from that of the UDF or the RPR on this issue. The precondition that Franceschi stated as necessary for territorial independence ("une majorité authentique") was quite in keeping with constitutional practice that had been recognised and observed under Giscard d'Estaing and his Fifth Republic predecessors.

Neither de Gaulle nor Giscard d'Estaing would have disagreed with PS policy touching on this question as it was outlined by Franceschi. Originally, article 76 of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic permitted a French TOM to accede to independence if this option was advocated by a majority in its Territorial Assembly, but only within four months from the promulgation of the Constitution on 4 October 1958, as stipulated in article 91.⁵⁰ Algeria's accession to independence in 1962, after a referendum which indicated that the majority of Algerian voters wished to relinquish French nationality, pushed back the barriers of this constitutional limitation. Not only had the deadline in article 76 passed, it was in any case inapplicable to French Algeria. Under the Fifth Republic French Algeria was comprised of a number of Departments, and was therefore constitutionally ineligible for independence. In allowing Algeria to secede, de Gaulle set a precedent for change. Subsequently a new interpretation of the Constitution was formulated in 1966 by the Gaullist Minister René

Capitant.⁵¹ Known as the Capitant Doctrine, this interpretation argued that article 53 of the Constitution, which mentioned that "les populations intéressées" had to be consulted over any change in status of French territory,⁵² overrode article 76. It was extrapolated that should it become apparent that a local majority in some part of the Republic might favour independence from France, the French Government should consult this group via a popular referendum. If the majority of voters in such a referendum backed independence, then France would relinquish its sovereignty over the territory in question. This interpretation gained widespread acceptance in government circles.⁵³ Using this new approach, France granted independence to the Comoros and Djibouti in 1975 and 1977 respectively. Apart from these two TOM, no other part of the Republic has gained sovereignty under the Capitant Doctrine. The limits of the doctrine would be tested in the unlikely event of a DOM pressing for independence.

Nor did Pons disagree with Franceschi's observation about the geostrategic importance of the DOM-TOM to France. The Socialist representative stated:

Grâce à elles [les DOM-TOM], la France possède la troisième zone économique maritime du monde. [...] Ces départements et territoires d'outre-mer, enfin, ont une importance stratégique et politique que nul ne conteste.⁵⁴

It is apparent from the speech made by Franceschi that in 1980 the PS did not in any way advocate the abandonment of the DOM-TOM. Overall, the PS policy summary he provided was uncontroversial. Social reform was promised, although such reform had already begun under Dijoud. On the basis of the comments offered, it was difficult to discern how any future Socialist administration proposed to break fundamentally with previous policy conduct in the DOM-TOM.

To the left of the PS, PC Deputies offered the most scathing critiques of government policy. Unlike the PS, the PC was not convinced of the necessity of retaining French control over the DOM-TOM. Since its foundation in 1920, the PC had favoured the concept of France decolonising its possessions.⁵⁵ Maxime Gremetz, speaking for the party, went so far as to conclude that in supporting links with the DOM-TOM, the three leaders of the UDF, RPR and of the PS demonstrated fundamental agreement: "MM. Giscard d'Estaing, Chirac et Mitterrand sont d'accord pour refuser aux peuples d'outre-mer de décider librement de leur sort."⁵⁶

This remark was overstated, but contained a grain of truth. In so far as they were unprepared to abandon constitutional precedent, none of the three were prepared to do as Gremetz suggested. Implicit in his words was the assumption that, given the opportunity, the PC would offer minority groups in the DOM-TOM their sovereignty. To date, the PC has not had the electoral strength to do so. It is highly improbable it will ever have sufficient votes to exercise a determining role in overturning the constitutional *status quo*. The PC was the only major party in the National Assembly which was hostile to French ties to the DOM-TOM. Communist Deputies were consequently isolated from exerting any major influence on DOM-TOM policy throughout the 1980s. Regardless, the PC repeatedly criticised the UDF, the RPR and the PS for their refusal to grant independence to electoral minorities in the DOM-TOM, as the case of New Caledonia illustrated.

The end of Giscard d'Estaing's presidency in 1981 created possibilities for new directions in DOM-TOM policy and thus for change in the French Pacific. Some aspects of UDF, RPR, PS and PC policies mentioned above were modified under changing circumstances in the years that followed. But the fundamental positions of the four main parties as expressed in 1980 did not change and exerted considerable influence on political debate concerning the Pacific TOM from 1981. The UDF maintained its focus on the importance of

promoting state-guided liberal reforms and modernisation that would close the gap in the standard of living between the French Pacific and metropolitan France. In keeping with its conception of Republican tradition, the RPR regarded itself as the more legitimate guarantor of the well-being of the Pacific TOM. Contemptuous of Giscardian and Socialist reforms, it advocated a form of decentralisation (notably in New Caledonia) as the most efficacious method of restoring local confidence in the Republic. The PS also expressed contempt for reforms under Giscard d'Estaing, and desired greater change in the French Pacific. The Socialists claimed solidarity with the disadvantaged there, although they did not initially have any reform proposals for these people that were markedly different from those already set in motion. Lastly, the PC acted as critic to the reformist approaches of all three of the other major parties, continuing its tradition of entrenched and simplistic anti-colonialism.

Such was the Parisian political backdrop to France's Pacific territories in the months preceding the election of Mitterrand in 1981. The extent to which the Parisian view of the Pacific TOM was prompted to change in the years that followed, and the effects of such change, constitute the subjects of the following three chapters.

Notes

¹ For instance, Dijoud's land reform law for New Caledonia was passed by the National Assembly only in 1980.

² See Giscard d'Estaing's glowing account of the effects of reforms undertaken in the DOM-TOM during his presidency. *Le Monde* 2 janvier 1981.

³ Ibid. 30 septembre 1980.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ This theory retained some popularity among conservative commentators and political leaders in metropolitan France and New Caledonia through to the middle of the 1980s. See Patrick Paitel: *L'enjeu Kanak* ch.15 for one of the more detailed arguments in its favour.

⁶ Dijoud downplayed the importance of the FI in New Caledonia, and of independence movements in the DOM-TOM in general, pointing out that the majority of the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM wished to remain French citizens. Interview in *Le Monde* 18 septembre 1979.

⁷ Commissariat Général du Plan. Comité Départements et Territoires d'Outre-Mer: *Préparation du huitième plan 1981-1985*.

⁸ Ibid. p.24.

⁹ See Philippe de Baleine: *Les danseuses de la France*; Jean-Claude Guillebaud: *Les confettis de l'Empire*.

¹⁰ Bernard Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire. De la rente atomique au développement* p.54.

¹¹ Ibid. p.55.

¹² For a perceptive analysis of Eurocentric values inherent in the concept of 'development', as it has been applied to New Caledonia see Isabelle Leblic: *Les Kanak face au développement. La voie étroite* pp.10-21.

¹³ *Le Monde* 26 juillet 1980.

¹⁴ Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.28.

¹⁵ Ibid. p.34.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.17.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. p.47.

²⁰ Ibid. pp.37-39.

²¹ Ibid. p.27.

²² Ibid. p.34.

²³ For more detailed discussion of this trend in French Polynesia, see Gilles Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française de 1960 à 1980. Un aperçu de son évolution* ch.2.

For an overview of agricultural decline in New Caledonia, see John Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky? The political history of a French colony* ch.6.

²⁴ In 1960, 46% of the French Polynesian workforce was in the primary sector. By 1971, this figure had dropped to 19%. In the same period, secondary sector employment grew from 19% to 33%, and tertiary sector numbers increased from 35% of the workforce to 46% of the workforce. From 1960 to 1969, the value of primary sector production fell from 39% of territorial production to 14%. In the same period, the value of secondary production increased from 15% to 22%, while tertiary sector production grew from 46% to 64%. Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.48.

²⁵ Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* pp.43-44.

²⁶ Ibid. p.63.

²⁷ Ibid. p.64.

²⁸ Ibid. p.65.

²⁹ Ibid. p.67.

³⁰ This situation persisted. The census of French Polynesia in 1983 pointed to inequalities between ethnic groups. Of those inhabitants aged 10 years and over, 19.5% of Polynesians had reached secondary school, compared to 33% of demis, 53% of Europeans, and 39% of Asians. Cited in Bernard Poirine: "L'échec scolaire des Polynésiens" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.253 tome XXI no.4 mars 1991 p.71.

³¹ According to the census of Wallis and Futuna in 1983, of the 5,217 indigenous inhabitants aged 20 years and over, 2,628 had received no education, 117 had been only to nursery school, 2,144 had reached primary school level, 315 had attended secondary school, and 13 had received

some form of higher education. INSEE: *Territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 février 1983* part 2 p.18.

³² Harry Mery, the Director-General of the Credit Society for the Development of the DOM, offered these general observations: "A la veille du VIII^e Plan, les DOM-TOM sont confrontés à deux problèmes majeurs. L'insuffisance des créations d'emplois et d'activités sur place s'est traduit par un accroissement du chômage et un recours massif à la migration, alors que l'économie de tous les départements et territoires repose de plus en plus sur des transferts publics en provenance de la métropole." *Le Monde* 26 juillet 1981. The migration mentioned was mainly internal in the case of the Pacific TOM. In French Polynesia and New Caledonia, lack of rural employment opportunities from the 1960s had led to rural drift to Papeete and Nouméa respectively. In Wallis and Futuna, population pressures and the search for work since the 1950s had resulted in the Wallisian population in New Caledonia outgrowing that of its homeland. Conversely, in the DOM since World War II, most migration has been to metropolitan France.

³³ Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.97.

³⁴ See, for example, B. Danielsson & M.-T. Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign*.

³⁵ "Départements et Territoires d'outre-mer. Déclaration du Gouvernement et débat sur cette déclaration" in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1652.

³⁶ *Ibid.* 11 juin 1980 p.1656.

³⁷ See chapters 2 and 4 below.

³⁸ The policies of the extreme-right FN are not considered here, as it was a marginal party in 1980, with no representatives in the National Assembly. In the following chapter its position on New Caledonian policy during the latter part of the 1980s is considered, but generally its response to government policy in the South Pacific has not been of determining significance.

³⁹ The debate was described as "Une illustration de la rivalité entre le R.P.R. et l'U.D.F." in *Le Monde* 12 juin 1980.

⁴⁰ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1679.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.1680.

⁴² *Le Monde* 12 juin 1980.

⁴³ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1660.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* p.1659.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* p.1662.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* pp.1662-1663.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p.1663.

⁵⁰ "Art. 76 - Les territoires d'outre-mer peuvent garder leur statut au sein de la République. S'ils en manifestent la volonté par délibération de leur assemblée territoriale prise dans le délai prévu au premier alinéa de l'article 91, ils deviennent soit départements d'outre-mer de la République, soit, groupés ou non entre eux, Etats [...]"

"Art. 91. - Les institutions de la République prévues par la présente Constitution seront mises en place dans le délai de quatre mois à compter de sa promulgation." Cited in Lê Mong Nguyen: *La Constitution de la Ve République* pp.457, 460.

⁵¹ O. Duhamel & Y. Mény: *Dictionnaire constitutionnel* p.58.

⁵² "Nulle cession, nul échange, nulle adjonction de territoire n'est valable sans le consentement des populations intéressées." Cited in Nguyen: *La Constitution de la Ve République* p.454.

⁵³ See Jacques Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* pp.141-142.

⁵⁴ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1663.

⁵⁵ See Jacques Dalloz: *La guerre d'Indochine 1945-1954* p.30.

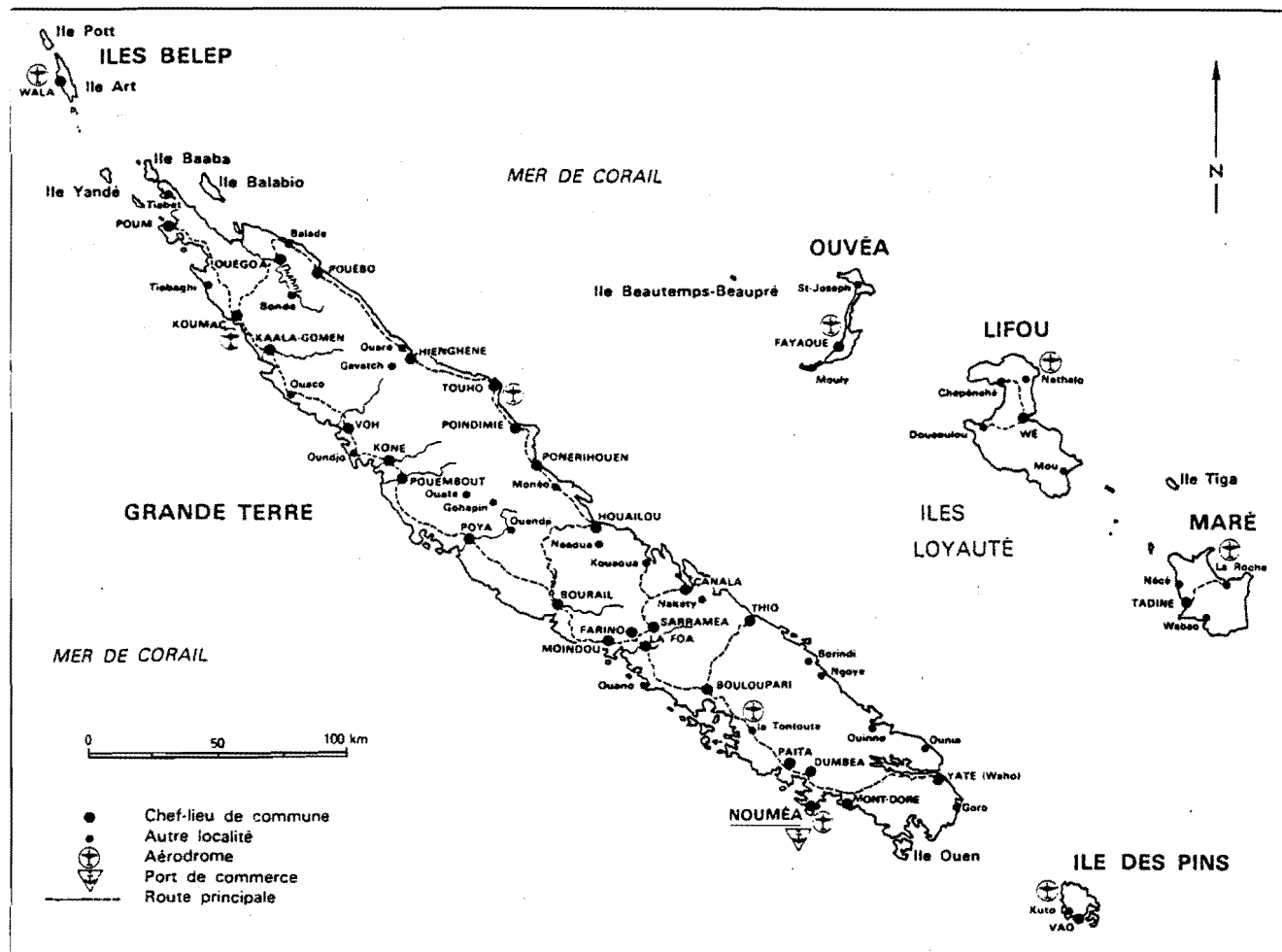
⁵⁶ *Le Monde* 12 juin 1980.

Table 1. New Caledonia. Basic Information

Land Area:	18,575km ² .
Maritime Zone:	1,450,000km ² .
Population (1989):	164,173.
Average Population Density:	8.8 inhabitants per km ² .
Currency:	F CFP (1FF = 18.18F CFP).
GDP (1988):	224,498MF CFP.
Average GDP per capita (1988):	1,372,061F CFP.
Principal Economic Activities:	Nickel mining, tourism.
Administrative Status:	French Overseas Territory.
Political Representation:	One Senator in the French Senate. Two Deputies in the French National Assembly.

Source: ITSEE: *Tableaux de l'Économie Calédonienne 1991*.

Map 2. New Caledonia



Source: Antonio Raluy: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.8.

2. New Caledonia

L'Etat doit veiller à effacer toute trace de colonialisme.
President Mitterrand, speaking to the Council of Ministers,
14 May 1986.¹

En écoutant Mitterrand, j'ai eu le sentiment qu'il ne connaissait pas le dossier. Pour lui, il y a un problème colonial, et moi je pense que ce n'est pas le cas.
Bernard Pons, RPR Minister of the DOM-TOM in 1986, recalling Mitterrand's speech.²

The Advent of Mitterrand

Mitterrand's idealistic remark concerning New Caledonia and its derisory commentary by Pons are symptomatic of the conflicting responses to the territory made by French political leaders of the Left and Right during most of the 1980s. In evidence are two different frames of reference. Mitterrand employs a term which is denied any relevance by Pons. Lack of consensus on the validity of ideologically loaded words such as 'colonialism' provoked much similar disagreement among French politicians in the 1980s.

The series of periodically violent confrontations that accompanied the rise of the Kanak nationalist movement in New Caledonia prompted much polemicising in Parisian political circles. Conflicting definitions of key concepts such as 'racism', 'equality', 'liberty' and 'justice' were applied by leaders and commentators of all political persuasions in debate over New Caledonia.³ Socialist, liberal and conservative rhetoric all invoked the traditions of the French Republic, European 'progress', and 'democracy', which liberals and conservatives used in contrast with Melanesian 'tribalism', 'primitivism' and 'terrorism'.⁴ Leftist hyperbole employed negatively charged words such as 'colonialism' and 'oppression' to describe the New Caledonian situation. These words were contrasted with the desirability of Melanesian 'liberation'. If any meaningful analysis is to be made of French government policy in New Caledonia, care must be exercised in distinguishing this political rhetoric from reality.

The sophistic tendencies of French political leaders were not the monopoly of any one party. Moreover such declamation was by no means foreign to New Caledonian political debate in the years preceding these troubles. The French presidential election campaigns conducted in New Caledonia in April and May 1981 are revelatory in this respect. During this period the leaders of the conservative RPCR, the New Caledonian political party with the biggest support, sought to discourage votes for Mitterrand. After the poor national showing in the first round of Jacques Chirac, the RPR candidate, the RPCR stressed the necessity to re-elect Giscard d'Estaing. Accordingly, a vote for Giscard d'Estaing would help preserve the stability of territorial institutions, while a vote for Mitterrand was portrayed as a step toward undermining those institutions.⁵ In displaying opposition to change by largely voting for Giscard d'Estaing in the second round on 10 May 1981, the New Caledonian electorate proved to be at odds with the national majority vote for Mitterrand. (Tables 2 and 3) The national political mandate for the Socialists, contrasting with the territorial block behind the RPCR, was symptomatic of the gulf between political outlooks at national and territorial level from 1981. Differences between the RPCR and the Socialists were to form a major barrier to the construction of policy consensus between Paris and Nouméa in the 1980s.

The RPCR painted an uncertain future for the territory should Mitterrand be elected. RPCR leaders sought to discredit Mitterrand in the eyes of the predominantly conservative New Caledonian electorate by linking him with two concepts viewed negatively by its members. The first of these concepts was 'change'. To accentuate the threatening image of possible change under a future Socialist President, 'Marxism', the second negative concept, was invoked. Jacques Lafleur, the RPR Deputy for New Caledonia and one of the founders of the RPCR, predicted the imminent arrival of Soviet style administration for France should the PS receive widespread support in the legislative elections.⁶ This prospect was abhorrent to New Caledonian conservatives, partly due to the anti-colonialist stance of the PC.

It may be observed in hindsight that predictions offered by Lafleur concerning a Communist takeover of French institutions were erroneous. There existed speculation early in 1981 that a Socialist Government under Mitterrand would be constrained to make concessions to the PC in order to maintain majority backing in the National Assembly. Such an eventuality did not come to pass. The PS obtained a sufficiently large majority in the French legislative elections of June 1981 to forestall this scenario. (Table 4) The electoral decline of the PC became apparent in the elections and has continued into the 1990s. (Tables 9, 13, 15, 21) If at national level the threat of Communism was exaggerated, at territorial level this was even more the case. No Communist party had been present in New Caledonia since the 1940s.⁷ Only marginal New Caledonian support was evident for Georges Marchais, the PC candidate in the first round of the presidential elections. As he received but 3.40% of the territorial vote (see Table 3), it could not be said that a local PC revival was imminent. The gap between New Caledonian political assessment and reality could indeed be wide.

The threats supposedly posed to New Caledonia by change and Marxism were to be repeated with some frequency by local conservatives after the national successes of the PS in the French legislative elections. Of the two concepts, the prospect of change proved to be the real challenge to conservative interests in the territory. Just what forms change would take in New Caledonia were a Socialist Government to be elected was not clear to the territorial electorate early in 1981. There were three principal reasons for this.

Firstly, direct PS representation and support in New Caledonia were absent. Unlike the RPR, which had maintained close ties with the RPCR from the time of the latter's formation in 1978 (RPCR representatives in the National Assembly and Senate sit in the RPR group), the Socialist presence in New Caledonia in 1981 was marginal and fragmented. The PSC had been established by local European activists in 1976,⁸ although it did not have any formal link with its metropolitan counterpart of the sort the RPCR enjoyed with the RPR.⁹ After the PSC became a member of the FI in 1979, its influence was confined to that of a minor member in the Melanesian nationalist coalition.¹⁰ The socialist vote formed the expression of a minority of predominantly European voters in the western Grande Terre. Melanesian UC votes for Mitterrand and the PS were to be of greater significance during the elections of 1981. (See Table 5) Far from strengthening the position of the PSC, Mitterrand's victory in the presidential elections served to undermine it. A fledgeling pro-Mitterrand party, the RCMP, sprang up in the wake of his success, proclaiming the imminence of socialist ascendancy in the territory.¹¹ The result was a split in New Caledonia's already marginal socialist vote, caused by divisions evident in the PSC.¹²

The main link for the FI with PS representatives in Paris was through Pidjot, the coalition's only parliamentary representative there.¹³ A senior member of the UC, the oldest and largest party within the FI, Pidjot had been a Deputy for New Caledonia since 1964. Although Pidjot did not belong to the Socialist group in the National Assembly, he did have direct access to PS Deputies. Owing to its parliamentary representation, its stable organisation, and

**Table 2. French Presidential Elections, 1981.
National Results¹**

First Round: 26 April

Registered voters	36,266,560
Votes cast	29,402,235
Turnout	81.07%
Valid votes	28,912,416

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing (UDF)	8,181,538	27.83
Mitterrand (PS)	7,486,139	25.47
Chirac (RPR)	5,206,477	17.71
Marchais (PC)	4,457,137	15.16
Others	3,616,784	12.3

Second Round: 10 May

Registered voters	36,351,056
Votes cast	31,208,353
Turnout	85.85%
Valid votes	30,321,723

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Mitterrand	15,700,287	50.31
Giscard d'Estaing	14,621,436	46.85

Source: *Le Monde* 28 avril, 12 mai 1981.

¹ Not including French votes cast in foreign countries.

**Table 3. French Presidential Elections, 1981.
New Caledonian Results**

First Round: 26 April

Registered voters	73,279
Votes cast	48,401
Turnout	66.05%
Valid votes	48,076

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing (UDF)	23,471	48.49
Mitterrand (PS)	11,218	23.18
Chirac (RPR)	8,479	17.52
Marchais (PC)	1,647	3.40
Others	2,392	4.94

Second Round: 10 May

Registered voters	73,086
Votes cast	52,719
Turnout	72.13%
Valid votes	52,289

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing	34,250	64.97
Mitterrand	8,039	34.22

Source: A. Clark: "New Caledonia and the new France" in *New Zealand International Review* September/October 1981 pp.25-26.

its large membership, the UC was best placed to negotiate on behalf of the FI. Considering that such PS policy as existed on New Caledonia was not articulated from a unified local base with formal links to the metropolitan party, and taking into account the conservative voting preferences of the majority of the territorial electorate, it is not surprising that votes for socialist parties in the territory were low.

The second hindrance to wider local understanding of PS policy on New Caledonia in 1981 was that policy's lack of depth when considered alongside the rest of Socialist policy. The PS had not formulated any detailed reform proposals for the administration of the territory. New Caledonia remained far from the forefront of metropolitan French political debate in 1981. The policy orientation of the PS, as of its opponents, was devoted to questions of more immediate concern to metropolitan French voters. Land reform, and the rise of Kanak nationalism in New Caledonia appeared to be marginal, parochial concerns when viewed from Paris, where national unemployment, social welfare reform and economic recovery constituted more pressing issues. Neither the PS election manifesto, finalised at the Créteil party congress in January 1981,¹⁴ nor Mitterrand's accompanying presidential election manifesto (the "110 propositions pour la France") made any specific mention of New Caledonia.¹⁵ This policy gap did not augur well for either the PS or New Caledonia. PS leaders were to spend their five years in government from 1981 belatedly and not very successfully formulating rushed legislation in response to increasing tensions in the territory.

The third barrier to wider New Caledonian comprehension of PS aims was, paradoxically, its main advocate in the territory; the FI. What little PS policy on New Caledonia existed tended to be filtered through the intermediary agency of FI representatives. FI declarations in favour of Mitterrand and the PS in the elections of 1981, and the FI interpretation of PS policy for the territory, hinged on the question of independence. The electoral support of the FI for the PS rested on certain statements offered by the Socialists which appeared to support New Caledonian self-determination. The negative response to the PS offered by the New Caledonian conservative majority stemmed directly from the FI's promotion of the PS as the party most likely to give the territory its sovereignty. To ascertain what PS policy implied for the future of New Caledonia, a distinction must be drawn between what that policy actually stated and the interpretation placed on it by the FI.

Initial contacts between the FI and the PS involved no policy ambiguity. The first links between the two formations were consolidated in November 1979, several months after the FI formed to contest the territorial elections in July of that year. Pierre Declercq, the UC Secretary-General, was instrumental in setting up a meeting in Paris on 9 November between UC leaders and the PS. Declercq and Pidjot met with Pierre Bérégovoy, then a member of the PS executive,¹⁶ and issued the following joint communiqué:

Le parti socialiste et le Front indépendantiste condamnent la politique colonialiste que la majorité mène en Nouvelle-Calédonie, qui se traduit particulièrement par l'opposition à l'émancipation politique. Le Front indépendantiste a exprimé la juste revendication d'indépendance du peuple canaque et sa volonté de garantir les droits fondamentaux de l'homme dans l'indépendance. Le parti socialiste a exprimé sa pleine solidarité au Front indépendantiste dans la lutte qu'il mène contre la politique de la droite et il a réaffirmé sa volonté de soutenir et de garantir le droit du peuple canaque à décider librement de son avenir.¹⁷

This communiqué was couched in the classic polemical style of the French Left and employed ideologically charged terminology of the variety noted earlier. It should be noted that at this time the FI did not confine itself to

obtaining PS backing for its claims. A similar statement was signed between the FI and the PC.¹⁸

The guarantee by the PS to the "peuple canaque" of a freely determined future was clear and unambiguous in its support of Kanak self-determination. However the statement made no mention of the non-Kanak majority in New Caledonia. What would become of the majority of the New Caledonian population that was content to stay French? It was this aspect of the declaration which aroused the ire of the RPR and UDF, and was to give them grounds for pointing out that the communiqué advocated an undemocratic policy which would go against the interests of a majority of the local population. Pierre Messmer, a former Prime Minister and the RPR Deputy for Moselle, commented on the declaration in May 1984:

Autrement dit, les socialistes promettaient le pouvoir et l'indépendance à une minorité, sans se soucier de la majorité [en Nouvelle-Calédonie]. Bel exemple de démocratie!¹⁹

However Melanesians had become a minority in New Caledonia as a consequence of government policy under the Fifth Republic. From the 1950s, and particularly during the nickel boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Paris had approved of the migration to the territory undertaken mainly by metropolitan French and Wallisians. In 1972 Messmer himself had described the territory as one of the last 'colonies de peuplement' in the world where a developed nation could settle its inhabitants. As Prime Minister that year he advocated entrenching French influence there through a "massive immigration" of metropolitan French citizens.²⁰ From a Kanak nationalist perspective, this advocacy was not necessarily democratic either, in that French migration to the territory drastically diminished the likelihood of New Caledonia becoming independent via a one-person one-vote self-determination referendum.

It was this immigration that the joint communiqué of September 1979 made reference to when condemning the "politique colonialiste" of the majority implemented in New Caledonia. In recognising the right of "le peuple kanak", as opposed to the wider New Caledonian population, to claim sovereignty, the PS accepted the FI perspective on this issue rather than that of Messmer. PS endorsement of the right of the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM to accede to independence dated back to the party's first government programme, issued in 1972.²¹ The Socialist Project, a party manifesto adopted in January 1980, restated this policy in terms more favorable to the FI.²² The joint communiqué between the FI and the PS went further than either of these general policies in offering specific recognition to the FI as the representative of the "peuple canaque" and in expressing "sa pleine solidarité" with its push for sovereignty. Mitterrand's own position on the possibility of New Caledonia becoming independent was less clear. Speaking in the National Assembly on 23 November 1979, he appeared to support the message of the joint communiqué issued earlier that month, without stating precisely where he stood on the issue of Kanak independence.²³

Statements by Mitterrand on New Caledonia, like those of the PS, were neither abundant nor detailed before the elections in 1981. No conclusive evidence existed that Mitterrand supported the independence programme of the FI before 1981. While he affirmed the right of the TOM to accede to independence in *Ici et Maintenant*,²⁴ a book published in 1980 which outlined his political views, he did not clarify under what conditions, although he probably meant under established constitutional arrangements whereby independence could be gained through a majority vote in a self-determination referendum. Mitterrand did not address the question of whether he was amenable to granting independence to a territorial electoral minority. Consequently, FI campaigning for Mitterrand was not initially very vigorous.

**Table 4. French Legislative Elections, 1981.
National Results**

First and Second Rounds: 14, 21 June

Registered voters	36,257,433
Votes cast	25,508,800
Turnout	70.35%
Valid votes	25,141,190

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
PS ¹	9,432,362	36.98	269
RPR	5,231,269	20.51	83
UDF	4,827,437	18.92	61
PC	4,065,540	15.94	44
Others	1,584,582	6.21	31

Source: *L'année politique, économique et sociale en France 1981* p.141.

¹ Here and in the other tables, PS is assumed to include not only the PS proper but also allied parties of the Left.

**Table 5. French Legislative Elections, 1981.
New Caledonian Results**

First Round: 14 June

First constituency (east coast and Loyalty Islands)

Registered voters	23,863
Votes cast	13,316
Turnout	55.80%
Valid votes	13,193

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Pidjot (UC)	5,160	38.75
Wetta (RPCR)	3,419	25.68
Naisseline (LKS/FULK/PSC)	3,223	24.20
Cherrier (FNSC)	1,248	9.37
Haudra (RCMP)	143	1.07

Second constituency (west coast and Nouméa)

Registered voters	49,504
Votes cast	30,542
Turnout	61.70%
Valid votes	29,977

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Lafleur (RPCR)	16,289	53.33
Camerlynck (FNSC)	5,549	18.17
Burck (UC)	4,486	14.69
Chivot (CSC)	1,570	5.14
Orezzoli (RCMP)	1,068	3.50
Others	1,015	3.32

Second Round: 21 June

First constituency

Registered voters	23,854
Votes cast	15,201
Turnout	63.73%
Valid votes	15,117

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Pidjot (UC)	6,348	41.76
Wetta (RPCR)	5,252	34.55
Naisseline (LKS/FULK/PSC)	3,517	23.14

Source: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 juin 1981, 22 juin 1981.

The UC urged its members to vote for Mitterrand in the first round of the presidential elections, but did not mobilise to campaign for Mitterrand until immediately before the second round.²⁵ The FULK urged its followers to abstain in both rounds due to the lack of debate offered by election candidates on the issue of independence.²⁶ Other FI members left to their followers the decision of whether to vote for either Mitterrand or Marchais, or to abstain.²⁷ With the additional exception of the unconvinced Palika, most of the FI campaigned for Mitterrand prior to the second round of the elections. In doing so, the majority of the FI was affirming its rejection of continuity under Giscard d'Estaing, opposition to the RPCR line, and the hope for social change should Mitterrand be elected.

Whether such social change would lead to independence for New Caledonia was an issue which Mitterrand chose not to address. Pidjot received a letter from Mitterrand after the first round that illustrates the presidential candidate's care in avoiding the question of independence. The emphasis in the letter to Pidjot was on social reform.²⁸ While affirming the need for social justice and the righting of neo-colonialist wrongs, no mention was made of self-determination.

Declercq asserted after Mitterrand's victory in the second round that for the UC, independence was not a campaign issue, and that the debate on that subject still lay ahead.²⁹ However, Pidjot clearly regarded any projected PS territorial reforms as the first step toward an independent New Caledonia.³⁰ Although during the legislative elections the PS displayed no prolixity on the topic of its past declaration of solidarity with Kanak nationalism, neither did it offer any indication that it had abandoned this commitment. The Government of Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy remained silent on this issue in the first few months after its appointment in June 1981.³¹

The advent of Mitterrand as President and the installation of the Fifth Republic's first Socialist Government implied an uncertain future for New Caledonia, one in which existing territorial administrative structures were to be transformed, although not to a prearranged agenda, under the new Socialist order. To that extent, the cited predictions both of local conservative leaders and of Kanak nationalists were correct. That the arrival of a PS administration in Paris necessarily implied the beginning of a territorial transition to independence, as local conservatives feared, and as Kanak nationalists hoped, was by no means certain. Neither was it certain that major political parties in New Caledonia, including the FI, would be receptive to changes implemented from Paris.

Whatever specific reforms for the territory the Mauroy Government was contemplating, circumstances were predisposed against their positive reception in Nouméa. New Caledonia's Territorial Assembly was dominated by elements hostile to the PS: the conservative RPCR and the liberal FNSC.³² The FNSC had backed Giscard d'Estaing and the UDF in the elections of 1981. The disparate minority elements within and outside the FI which had campaigned for the Socialists to varying degrees (or not at all) did not constitute a stable platform for the promotion of Socialist reforms. Were the Mauroy Government to show any hesitation in discussing conditions for New Caledonian self-determination, Kanak critics had the potential to be just as vehement as those of the FNSC and of the RPCR should independence be pushed to the centre of political debate. Whatever course the new Government might choose in New Caledonia, it ran the risk of alienating either the greater or smaller part of the territorial electorate.

The Giscardian Heritage: New Caledonia in 1981

New Caledonia had become a TOM in 1946 under the Fourth Republic, an event of pivotal importance in the shaping of its political and social development until 1981. It was under the Fourth Republic that local party politics took form. The impetus for this formation was provided by newly enfranchised Melanesian voters, represented by the UC.³³ UC demands for social, land, and administrative reforms in the 1950s marked the starting point of political events that led to the rise of Melanesian nationalism from the middle of the 1970s. The greater territorial autonomy advocated by the UC in the 1950s received recognition in 1956 under the 'loi-cadre Defferre', a Socialist Government administrative reform promulgated in Paris which aimed to facilitate the transition of France's African TOM to greater autonomy, but which equally applied to its Pacific TOM. After 96.51% of voters in New Caledonia backed continued adherence to France in a self-determination referendum held in September 1958,³⁴ the internal administrative autonomy the Defferre law ceded was revoked under the Fifth Republic.

The pace of liberal reform slowed from 1958. In the 1960s conservative political groupings coalesced into a united front which came to dominate local government at the same time as the UC experienced increasing internal divisions and a loss of confidence. De Gaulle reduced local administrative control and centralised local government around the High Commissioner, the state representative to the territory. The Billotte laws of 1969 accentuated the trend toward centralisation by establishing 32 communes administered according to metropolitan French law. Formerly the administration of communes had been a direct territorial responsibility. The Billotte laws in addition passed control of mineral resources to Paris. The nickel boom from 1969 to 1972 accentuated the stifling of UC plans for greater territorial autonomy. Migrating French citizens from mainland France and the other two Pacific TOM who arrived to partake of New Caledonian economic prosperity furthered the reduction of the local Melanesian population to minority status,³⁵ and thereby entrenched the electoral power of local conservative parties. These immigrants to New Caledonia shunned the political agendas of local Melanesians and displayed support for conservative parties led predominantly by Caldoches.

The frustration of Melanesian aspirations to greater social and administrative participation in a more autonomous New Caledonia during the 1960s and 1970s led an increasing number of Melanesians to abandon hope of developing their identity within the French Republic. The frustration of Kanak demands for internal reform caused the leaders of those in the UC and its break-away parties in the late 1970s to accept that Melanesian particularism could only be recognised through independence from France. The birth of Kanak nationalism occurred just before Paris opted for a programme of liberal reforms in New Caledonia, intended to recognise at least some Melanesian aspirations. For Kanak nationalists, Paris's recognition of the desirability of change represented a belated response that offered them little.

The Socialist electoral victories of 1981 effectively brought Dijoud's reforms in New Caledonia to an end just over two years after their introduction there. Too few of the Dijoud Plan's goals had been achieved in the interim to permit a balanced assessment of it. The pattern of a newly appointed Government in Paris cutting short the policy activity of its predecessor in New Caledonia was to be repeated later in the 1980s. However some analysis of the plan can serve as a basis for comparison with subsequent reforms.

The Dijoud Plan was presented to the New Caledonian Territorial Assembly on 21 February 1979. The ten year development plan proposed a series of reforms which would assist local economic expansion, and aimed to eliminate some of the social inequalities Melanesians faced. The UC criticised the plan as inadequate. Like the redefinition of the territorial statute in 1976,³⁶ the

Table 6. New Caledonia's Exports and Imports 1980-1990

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Exports(MF CFP)	29,556	33,194	27,124	23,511	35,862	48,618	24,165	24,832	67,237	75,003	46,413
Imports(MF CFP)	35,041	40,435	43,732	42,202	49,605	52,648	59,382	63,353	65,386	88,608	86,929
Coverage Rate (%)	84.3	82.1	62.0	55.7	72.3	92.3	40.7	39.2	102.8	84.6	53.4

Sources: ITSEE *TEC 1988* p.201, *TEC 1991* p.207.

Dijoud Plan did not devolve existing state administrative responsibilities for New Caledonia. Dijoud's assertion that New Caledonia was underpopulated and should be opened to more immigration³⁷ was not well received by Kanak nationalists, who resented the fact that the Melanesian population had already been reduced to a minority in the territory. Another contentious point was represented by Dijoud's assumption that acceptance of the plan by the Territorial Assembly would imply a commitment to a ten-year moratorium on the question of New Caledonian independence.³⁸ This assumption was unacceptable to the UC and the other Melanesian parties which were to form the FI in July 1979. In recognition of some of the advantageous aspects the plan held for Melanesians, the UC abstained from voting on the plan rather than directly opposing it. Territorial Councillors from other pro-independence parties took their opposition further by boycotting the assembly debate. In spite of this opposition, the Territorial Assembly approved the Dijoud Plan through the support of the RPCR, the FNCS and the PSC.³⁹ These representatives were receptive to the economic assistance the plan offered to New Caledonia, and regarded a moratorium on self-determination positively.

In response to an economic decline in New Caledonia, territorial trade growth represented a major concern of the plan. By 1979, the nickel boom had receded into the past. Metallurgy and mining, the single most important productive sector of the territory's economy, was in decline due to the instability of the international market. This trend was reflected in falling New Caledonian production and through its declining percentage of territorial GDP: 27.53% in 1974; 15.93% in 1979.⁴⁰ The average price of a kilogram of nickel fell from around 125F CFP in 1974, to a low of around 70F CFP in 1978, before climbing to a short-lived peak of about 140F CFP in 1979 that tailed off in years to follow.⁴¹ These variations influenced the fate of the territorial economy in that period. Total annual GDP in New Caledonia dropped to 95% of the 1974 GDP total in 1978, reached 101% of the 1974 total in 1979, and declined to 93% of the 1974 total by 1981.⁴² As territorial economic fortunes were largely dependent on nickel exports, this decline was troublesome for New Caledonia.

The Dijoud Plan expressed the need for local economic diversification and for the creation of import substitution industries in terms which were to be repeated on a larger scale in the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM. An agricultural revival in New Caledonia was projected.⁴³ The importance of increasing tourism in the territory was outlined. Mining would be diversified through the introduction of foreign investment, while other industries had to be encouraged to increase territorial self-sufficiency. The Plan also pointed out the desirability of exploiting local maritime resources.

The means to these ends foreshadowed the orientation of the Eighth Plan. A diversification of New Caledonian economic activities would be undertaken through government initiatives such as the establishment of credit facilities,⁴⁴ encouragement of foreign investment in mining and fisheries,⁴⁵ and the improvement of the territorial educational, technical and administrative infrastructure.⁴⁶ New Caledonia would be aided in its economic expansion by the development of closer economic relations with its Pacific neighbours, who would provide it with export markets.⁴⁷ The initiative for these links would, of necessity, have to originate from Paris. Foreign relations remained the prerogative of the State rather than of the Territorial Assembly.

By 1981, only the beginnings of these reforms had been set in motion. The effects of the Dijoud Plan on the New Caledonian economy in 1980 and 1981 were not remarkable. In that period, the local balance of trade did not improve. The value of exports covered 84.3% of the value of imports in 1980, and 82.1% in 1981.⁴⁸ The territory depended on state subsidies to stabilise its balance of payments. However generous by the standards of the day, the territorial budget proposed by Dijoud in February 1979 of 130 billion CFP for the next ten years would have been inadequate in addressing this ongoing

balance of payments problem.⁴⁹ (Table 6) Government spending in New Caledonia was to outstrip this projection in the 1980s.⁵⁰

Dijoud's recognition of the inhabitants of New Caledonia was a major policy innovation for a French Minister, as it included land, cultural and social policy renovations as well as administrative reforms, although it entailed certain conceptual limits. While Dijoud hoped to encourage New Caledonians to participate in the development of their territory, he refrained from going so far as delegating greater administrative powers to them.⁵¹ The Dijoud Plan, like the Eighth Plan, failed to answer the question of how meaningful local participation in territorial policy formation was to take place while Paris retained executive and financial control. Dijoud and his ministerial colleagues were not prepared to reduce the powers of the French State, possibly because greater autonomy might allow territorial leaders to steer reform in a direction deemed undesirable in Paris.

The manner in which the Dijoud Plan addressed the interests of indigenous Melanesians is of particular importance in the context of the increasing vehemence of Kanak calls from the late 1970s and into the 1980s for greater recognition of their identity and problems. The unwillingness of Dijoud to respond to the demands of Kanak parties to their satisfaction contributed to the foundation of the FI and its call for more radical reform in greater recognition of indigenous particularism.

Part of the objection of the FI to the Dijoud Plan resided in the treatment of the recognition of Melanesian cultural identity. Here the interests of Melanesian cultural particularism clashed with stress on cultural pluralism within a dominant French culture. Dijoud's plan was the first for New Caledonia which recognised and supported Melanesian culture as well as local European culture, but it did so within the wider context of establishing recognition of ethnic plurality in the territory.⁵² Dijoud's aim was to promote Melanesian culture while considering it a component within the Fifth Republic.⁵³ Melanesian culture would be encouraged, not as the basis of Kanak nationhood, as Kanak parties would have preferred, but as a regional culture, in the same way as Paris reluctantly began giving recognition to Breton, Basque, Occitan and Corsican culture in metropolitan France in the early 1970s. In much the same fashion as in Brittany, Euskadie, Occitanie and Corsica, indigenous culture in New Caledonia would be encouraged through the organisation of indigenous language courses, the funding of traditional artisanal activities, and through the establishment of cultural centres.⁵⁴ Another target of the plan was to consolidate the character of the European community in the territory.⁵⁵ Assuming this consolidation was necessary, a debatable point given the already existing dominance of European culture in New Caledonian educational institutes, the media, business and administration, it could only grate on the sensibilities of Kanak nationalists. Equally controversial to Kanaks was the plan's target to integrate the cultures of Wallisians, Tahitians, Indonesians and other non-European immigrant minorities into the local cultural milieu. Kanaks tended to regard these minority communities in New Caledonia as interlopers, whose presence deprived Kanaks of work and land. Henceforth these non-indigenous minorities were to receive state cultural funding as well. Rather than promoting harmony through pluralism, the Dijoud Plan served to aggravate Kanak disenchantment through the recognition of non-indigenous cultures. The FI would have preferred a recognition of Kanak exclusivism in response to the status of the indigenous Melanesian population as the single largest ethnic group and as the prior occupants of New Caledonia.

As part of the cultural reforms in the Dijoud Plan three bodies, the Melanesian Cultural Institute, the Bureau of Vernacular Languages, and Melanesian Promotion (a territorial initiative) were founded. The last of these bodies began its work in August 1979, and prepared a broad agenda for Melanesian land, educational, legal, cultural and womens' rights. This agenda

was boycotted by the FI, which argued that Franck Wahuzue, the chairman of Melanesian Promotion, represented neither its interests, nor the better interests of Melanesians in general. At the time of his appointment, Wahuzue was an RPCR Territorial Councillor.⁵⁶ The refusal of the FI to cooperate with Melanesian Promotion was part of a wider rejection of the cultural policy installed under the Dijoud Plan.

The most contentious issue of all addressed by the Dijoud Plan was land reform. Confrontations between European landowners and Melanesian tribes over tribal land claims had multiplied from 1976. Melanesian tribes were increasingly claiming the return of lands they had been forced to abandon decades earlier during European rural settlement. The growth of tribal populations, the return of unemployed Melanesian youths from Nouméa since the start of the economic depression from the mid-1970s, and the growth of Kanak identity contributed to this trend. Arguably the most racially divisive issue in New Caledonia, land redistribution was an immediate concern to Kanak nationalists, for whom the return of ancestral lands often meant the enhancement of traditional tribal pride and identity.⁵⁷

The Dijoud Plan recognised the importance of land to Melanesian identity, but could not accept tribal ownership as a privileged form of land tenure under French law. On the contrary, individual rather than tribal title was promoted in the Dijoud Plan. As part of the goal to encourage cash cropping, it was hoped that Melanesians could, through land redistribution, be encouraged to establish themselves as freehold farmers outside the tribal milieu.⁵⁸ The Plan mentioned that European landowners would be subject to land purchases by means of government funds administered by the territory, although this would only be done "à l'amiable".⁵⁹ The forced eviction of rural Europeans was not envisaged, but later this position was revised when the FNSC furthered tribal interests by lobbying at territorial and national level for compulsory purchase. The FNSC held that various European landowners were holding up land redistribution by refusing to sell land they were not cultivating, whether because they thought the price was not good enough, and/or because they opposed passing it over to Melanesians. This aspect of the land reform proposals outlined in the Dijoud Plan was modified by a land reform law adopted by the National Assembly on 20 December 1980, which allowed under certain circumstances for land to be purchased compulsorily from Europeans in favour of tribal claims.⁶⁰ European landowners resented this turn-around.

After decades of government neglect of land reform the redistribution of New Caledonian land undertaken during the presidency of Giscard d'Estaing was a major achievement. Land redistribution steadily increased in the late 1970s. Approximately 2,000ha were reattributed in 1977, 4,000ha in 1978, 8,000ha in 1979, and 10,000ha in 1980.⁶¹ Tribal landholdings in New Caledonia increased from an estimated 374,000ha in 1976,⁶² to over 375,000ha in 1978,⁶³ and to more than 376,000ha by 1980.⁶⁴ It is plain that not all of the reattributed land went to Melanesian tribes. Private Melanesian ownership of land increased substantially in this period, to the point that by 1981, 162 Melanesians either tenanted or owned 15,750ha outside the tribal milieu.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, these individual titles represented a minor proportion of Melanesian land holdings. The large scale conversion of tribal holdings to individual tenancy did not appear to be an immediate prospect.

Much controversy surrounded redistribution of land to tribal title. The RPCR contested the priority it believed was accorded to tribal land claims, preferring to encourage modern individually owned farms rather than what it perceived as economically backward tribal land tenure. Rural Kanak activists advocated much wider redistribution and contested the Plan's recognition of individual Melanesian land tenure, while some European landowners believed that reforms had already gone too far. The latter group's grievances were to

increase, as the land reforms undertaken by Dijoud presaged greater changes to be introduced under Socialist Governments in the 1980s.

In New Caledonia from 1981, Socialist Governments were to build on the Dijoud Plan's guarded, liberal reforms until 1983, before accelerating the rate of change in the territory to a pace far beyond that envisaged by Dijoud.

New Caledonia and Henri Emmanuelli

Henri Emmanuelli, Mauroy's first Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, offered a moderate and somewhat conventional initial message to the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM on 25 May 1981. Emmanuelli expressed his intention of furthering social justice in the DOM-TOM, and of consolidating their links with the Republic, as his contribution to the Socialist "redressement national" which aimed to renovate French society.⁶⁶ His message appeared reassuring for the FNSC and the RPCR, although it inevitably failed to address the nationalist agenda of the FI, or indeed the pro-independence stances of other nationalist parties in the DOM-TOM.

Emmanuelli was, as might be expected, a novice as far as New Caledonia, and the DOM-TOM in general, were concerned. Like previous appointees to the post he had not had direct experience in the administration of this domain. With a career in banking before his election as a PS Deputy for Landes in 1978, he could not be described as an *habitué* of DOM-TOM policy.⁶⁷ He had a knowledge of economics and finance which was to serve him in understanding New Caledonian economic difficulties, but he did not have the opportunity to overcome these problems during his 22 months overseeing the DOM-TOM. From 1981 to 1983 New Caledonia's capacity for self-sufficiency slid drastically due to the drop in the international market value of nickel, the ongoing decline of local agricultural production, and the limited progress in promoting the creation of new businesses in the primary and secondary sectors. In 1981, territorial exports covered 82.1% of the value of imports. In 1982, this figure fell sharply to 62.0%. By 1983 it had declined further to 49.4%.⁶⁸ This trend served to underline the pressing need for territorial economic development. While preoccupied with a policy agenda designed to assist the most disadvantaged group within New Caledonia, namely its indigenous Melanesians, Emmanuelli neglected the overall economic well-being of New Caledonia.

Emmanuelli's first contact with New Caledonia was on 7 August 1981, the beginning of a five day visit. During this visit, he avoided the question of New Caledonian independence. In his speech to the Territorial Assembly on 11 August he called instead for radical social change through land reform and Melanesian development. Emmanuelli deplored the inequalities and injustices he had witnessed during his brief stay, and concluded from them that "le terme colonial n'a pas été tout à fait évacué" from New Caledonia.⁶⁹ He denounced the state of land distribution, announcing that more must be done to increase tribal domains, a conciliatory message for the FI. Social equality would be furthered by adapting education to local needs, and by the introduction of a personal income tax system intended to redistribute private wealth for public spending. These observations were not greeted with enthusiasm by the RPCR Territorial Councillors present. The RPCR did not recognise an ethnic problem in New Caledonia, and held that its troubles were solely the result of a depressed economy.⁷⁰ Redistributing more land to Melanesian tribal societies was considered a detrimental commitment. This undertaking would not assist the resurgence of commercial agricultural production, as Melanesian tribes preferred subsistence agriculture to cash cropping. Income tax was perceived by the RPCR as a state infringement of individual liberties.

Overall, Emmanuelli announced:

[...] il est juste temps de modifier en profondeur la réalité économique et sociale, qu'il s'agisse du système de production où la place des importations est démesurée, ou encore des problèmes agraires, où il est évident qu'il faut sans tarder faire une nouvelle répartition de la terre.⁷¹

The difficulties he addressed were the same ones which had concerned Dijoud. Emmanuelli's response was not dissimilar either, apart from the left-wing veneer in his speech provided by adjectives such as 'colonial'. The administrative dirigisme of Emmanuelli's predecessors appeared likely to continue, although he attempted, unconvincingly, to render this prospect more acceptable. He recognised the need to avoid an imposition of solutions, although he maintained that if the Government were to find itself confronted with indecision or inertia at territorial level, it would impose its judgement.⁷² In an attempt to reassure the conservatives present, Emmanuelli rounded off his speech with a stirring evocation of the nobility and virtue inherent in French Republican values.⁷³

In August, whereas the UC was prepared to wait in order to give the new administration time to come to terms with the situation in New Caledonia, the other Kanak parties believed that the Government had shelved any idea of independence and therefore boycotted Emmanuelli during his visit.⁷⁴ By October, the leaders of the UC had also become impatient. Pidjot and Jean-Marie Tjibaou, then an FI Territorial Councillor and the Mayor of Hienghène, unsuccessfully lobbied the Government in Paris.⁷⁵ The visit culminated in a discussion with Mitterrand at the Elysée on 26 October. In response to Tjibaou's questioning about what position he held on the recognition of Kanak sovereignty, Mitterrand did not deny the right of Kanaks to claim independence, but pointed out that as President he was obliged to take into account the interests of those New Caledonians opposed to independence as well.⁷⁶

Emmanuelli, when questioned in early October 1981 by an Australian journalist on his Government's attitude to the political programme of the FI, gave a similarly measured, constitutionally impeccable response. His criterion for offering self-determination to New Caledonia, or to any other component of the DOM-TOM, was consistent with Franceschi's outline of PS policy offered in the National Assembly debate held on 10 June 1980. Accession to independence would be dependent on a local electoral majority advocating this option.⁷⁷ In the absence of majority backing for independence the FI would have to wait.

The PS displayed internal solidarity over this position, but no such consensus was evident among the socialist minority groups in New Caledonia. In October 1981, the PSC split over the question of promoting independence. A new party, the Parti Socialiste de Nouvelle-Calédonie, was formed. It adopted the stance of the PS regarding independence. The remainder of the PSC continued favouring immediate self-determination.⁷⁸ The gaps between the New Caledonian sympathisers of the PS had not closed.

At this time neither Mitterrand nor the Mauroy Government could afford to express messages of solidarity with the FI such as that of 1979. Tensions in New Caledonia had been heightened by the murder of Declercq on 19 September 1981, the first assassination of a politician in the territory. Kanak militants occupied farms around Canala from the following day to pressure the Government into recognising their nationalist claims. The official response was to send in gendarmes and to condemn the tactics of violent confrontation, a reaction repeated as troubles continued sporadically into 1982.⁷⁹ A government stand in support of Kanak nationalism at that point risked provoking further violence from extremist conservative elements in New Caledonia. As far as the Mauroy Government was concerned, discussion of independence would have to wait until the FI enjoyed wider support for its position.

In the meantime, Paris intended to provide the basis for Melanesian social advancement through reforms under the existing territorial statute. On 13 December 1981 government aims were announced by Emmanuelli in Nouméa.

He presented to the Territorial Assembly the case for implementing legislation in New Caledonia by ordinance. Such a measure would permit the Mauroy Government to legislate rapidly without the constraint of having to gain the assent of Parliament.⁸⁰ The Territorial Assembly rejected this proposal in a vote on 22 December.⁸¹ The RPCR and FNSC were unenthusiastic about giving assent to a Socialist Government to fast track legislation which might be ill-conceived. This opposition counted for little in legislative terms. Under the Constitution, the Government was only required to consult with the Territorial Assembly concerning legislation directly affecting New Caledonia, prior to presenting that legislation to Parliament. Nouméa could oppose legislation emanating from Paris, but held no power of veto over it.⁸²

Emmanuelli cited two reasons for recourse to legislation by ordinance. The first involved the dominance of the FNSC and the RPCR in the Territorial Assembly, which he stated would block normal channels of legislation.⁸³ His explanation did not square well with his professed respect for the wishes of the local majority on the question of self-determination. It was considered permissible for the FNSC and the RPCR to form a block against independence, but not for them to stand in the way of social reform. Emmanuelli omitted mention of the fact that under the territorial statute, whatever the stance of the majority of the Territorial Assembly, Paris held more administrative power than Nouméa, and could forestall initiatives by the Territorial Assembly of which it disapproved.⁸⁴ Ordinances were not necessary to control the Territorial Assembly. Emmanuelli later admitted that he wanted to circumvent Parliament to some extent. He cited the raft of other Socialist reforms tabled for consideration by Parliament in 1982, and claimed that had his proposals been tabled as bills, their legislation would have been delayed until late 1983.⁸⁵ More to the point, Emmanuelli wanted to avoid obstruction in the National Assembly and the Senate from the RPR and UDF of the sort that would delay and hinder his decentralisation bill for the DOM in late 1982.⁸⁶

The paradox of a Socialist Government adopting extraordinary powers to fast track legislation for New Caledonia while simultaneously expressing support for decentralisation, whether elsewhere in the DOM-TOM, or in metropolitan France, did not pass unnoticed. The RPR concentrated on this contradiction during the National Assembly's debate on Emmanuelli's ordinance bill on 14 January 1982. Didier Julia, an RPR Deputy, chided:

En effet, quand on veut décentraliser, on décentralise et quand on veut administrer de Paris, on administre de Paris; mais on ne peut pas administrer de Paris, sous prétexte de décentraliser.⁸⁷

The logic of M. Julia's argument was clear enough, although the RPR was to find itself following in the footsteps of Emmanuelli in similar fashion between 1986 and 1988. Like the Mauroy Government in 1982, the Chirac Government in this later period was not prepared to cede the administrative powers which would have allowed the Territorial Assembly to formulate its own administrative structures.

Thanks to both the PS majority and the support of the PC, the National Assembly approved recourse to ordinances. The finalised law allowed the Government to legislate by ordinance until 31 December 1982. Ordinances issued would have to be ratified by Parliament by 28 January 1983.⁸⁸

Of the seven ordinances approved under the new law, three were of special significance.⁸⁹ The first of these, Ordinance no.82-878, established the ODIL. The ODIL aimed to encourage rural commerce, and was jointly administered by government, territorial, and communal representatives. Ordinance no.82-879 created the OCSTC, an institution with a wider mandate than its Giscardian forebear, the Melanesian Cultural Institute. The OCTSC was assigned the role of coordinating existing bodies related to Melanesian culture,

including the territorial museum and archaeological department. There was no hint in the ordinance of the cultural pluralism advocated by Dijoud. The promotion of things "Canaque" was considered an overriding priority. Ordinance no.82-880 created the Land Office, which had as its conflicting tasks the redistribution of land in favour of Melanesian tribal claims, and the encouragement of land use for agricultural production. The individual Melanesian land tenure advocated under Dijoud was not mentioned, and the ordinance expressly recognised that tribal land claims took precedence over those of Europeans.

The ODIL, OCSTC and the Land Office formed the tripodal base for Emmanuelli's renovation of New Caledonia, a renovation which would strengthen Melanesian identity and supposedly promote balanced dialogue:

Au total, c'est à un remodelage politique, économique et social du Territoire que le gouvernement veut parvenir, lorsque chacune des communautés disposera à nouveau des moyens d'un dialogue équilibré, le destin de la Nouvelle-Calédonie pourra alors être repris en main par les Calédoniens eux-mêmes, étant bien entendu que cela nécessite un changement radical et rapide des mentalités.⁹⁰

Emmanuelli overestimated the capacity of New Caledonian leaders to change their mentalities. In particular, he underestimated the entrenched conservatism of the RPCR. It was an error of judgement to be repeated by his successors up to the end of Socialist rule in March 1986.

The response of the RPCR to Emmanuelli's reforms was strenuously negative, particularly as the FNSC had aligned itself with the FI in the first half of 1982. As had been the case with land reform in 1980, the FNSC and the RPCR found themselves holding divergent positions on social reform, with the former being more responsive to change. The liberal FNSC did not find the renovations as unpalatable as did the RPCR. Government avoidance of the issue of independence helped Emmanuelli to gain the confidence of the FNSC, which asserted that Socialist reforms would calm Kanak militancy. In January 1982 the party joined with the FI to vote in the Government's proposed personal income tax system for New Caledonia.⁹¹ By June, FNSC support for government initiatives had led it to form an alliance with the FI that resulted in the formation of a new territorial Government Council. Tjibaou was appointed Vice-President, subordinate only to the High Commissioner. The FI held four seats on the Government Council, and the FNSC had two, while the remaining member was an independent. The balance of power in the Territorial Assembly shifted to the advantage of the FI. Its 14 councillors formed a coalition with the seven FNSC representatives. The remainder of the chamber consisted of 13 RPCR Territorial Councillors and two independents.⁹² This alliance was to survive until late 1984. It upset the previous conservative dominance of territorial institutions, and provoked a conservative backlash.

The RPCR argued in vain that the Territorial Assembly should be dissolved and new elections should be called, on the grounds that the FNSC had betrayed its supporters by aligning with the FI.⁹³ Members of an extreme-right group, the MOP, illegally occupied the Territorial Assembly on 22 July and shouted at FI and FNSC Councillors to resign, before riot police were called in and a mêlée broke out.⁹⁴ Faced with FI and FNSC unwillingness to address this argument, Lafleur provoked a by-election for his post as Deputy on 5 September 1982 to test his support. His re-election was achieved with an impressive mandate. He obtained 86.26% of the vote after campaigning against a political unknown.⁹⁵ With 23,345 votes, Lafleur gained 7,056 votes more than he had in the legislative elections of 1981. (Table 5) It was probable that large numbers of former FNSC supporters had voted for him. For all the posturing this gesture involved, it did serve to underline the strength of the RPCR vote. The FI/FNSC alliance succeeded in further alienating the RPCR from the Government's political, social and economic remodelling of the territory.

Although the FI had moderated its agenda by forming an alliance with the FNSC to promote Socialist reform, the rift between the Mauroy Government and the FI over immediate self-determination remained. The FI backed Emmanuelli's reforms for their promise of improving Melanesian welfare but had not abandoned support for independence. Having failed to achieve its earlier target of Kanak independence by September 1982,⁹⁶ the UC still retained hopes of achieving sovereignty by September 1984.⁹⁷ The minority parties in the FI still shared the hope for independence with the UC, even if they disagreed on the need to wait so long.

Lemoine: in Search of Conciliation

In March 1983, Emmanuelli's involvement with New Caledonia came to an end as a result of a portfolio reshuffle under Prime Minister Mauroy. Emmanuelli was appointed Secretary of State to the Budget, a post where his banking experience could be used to greater effect. In the weeks prior to his reappointment, it was apparent that the evolution of mentalities he had hoped for in New Caledonia had yet to materialise. Confrontation between Kanaks, Europeans and the forces of law and order broke out on 10 January 1983. Two gendarmes were killed when a Kanak protest over logging compensation for a Melanesian tribe escalated into violence, resulting in the arrest of 18 Kanaks. The RPCR and LKS organised demonstrations, the former against Kanaks, and the latter in defence of them.⁹⁸ The decision by Mauroy and Mitterrand to shift Emmanuelli to another portfolio may have been motivated by a realisation that he had not managed to gain the confidence of the majority of New Caledonians, as well as by disappointment at the checks imposed on his decentralisation reforms in the DOM.

For Emmanuelli's replacement, Georges Lemoine, New Caledonia was to become a preoccupying aspect of the DOM-TOM portfolio. Intermittent violence, and the deterioration of relations between the RPCR and the FI/FNSC coalition, were symptomatic of worsening rifts which needed to be addressed by Paris. The Mauroy Government resolved to respond to the situation in New Caledonia by redrawing the territorial statute, with the aim of promoting greater social justice.

Consultations with local party leaders over the drafting of a new territorial statute had begun during Emmanuelli's last months in office, but it was under Lemoine that the bulk of preparatory work for a new statute took place. The responsibility for the implementation of Emmanuelli's ordinances also rested with Lemoine. The establishment of the new offices instituted by the ordinances took place slowly. Pidjot complained to the National Assembly on 17 November 1983 that the OCSTC was still not operational, thanks to delay in nominating a director.⁹⁹ The ODIL was also slow in starting; it was established eight months behind schedule.¹⁰⁰ The Land Office had less trouble in this respect, although it remained to be seen whether its land redistribution could keep pace with tribal demands.

Lemoine took up the post of Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM with greater knowledge of the DOM-TOM and New Caledonia than Emmanuelli had had in 1981. With Lafleur among others, Lemoine had been on the committee which drew up the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM in the late 1970s.¹⁰¹ Lemoine had become personally acquainted with other New Caledonian political leaders during his time as Secretary-General of the Association of French Mayors.¹⁰² Lemoine's contacts and skills of negotiation were to be tested to their limit and ultimately fell short of producing a local entente.

In Nouméa on 20 May 1983 Lemoine announced his policy priorities for New Caledonia to the Territorial Assembly. His pronouncements on the recognition of Melanesian culture, land rights and territorial development echoed those of Emmanuelli. Unlike Emmanuelli, Lemoine addressed the issue of self-

determination in his first speech to the Territorial Assembly. He mentioned that independence was not ruled out by the Government, but he was suggestively vague as to whom voter eligibility in a self-determination referendum might apply:

Parler d'autodétermination signifie qu'un choix soit proposé aux habitants du Territoire. Et quand je dis que l'avenir du Territoire sera l'affaire de tous les habitants, j'entends les véritables habitants et bien entendu j'en exclus ceux qui sont de passage pour une mission temporaire.¹⁰³

The conditions under which a referendum might be held had not been touched on by Emmanuelli. It was a sensitive subject. In keeping his statement vague, Lemoine wished to avoid upsetting either RPCR or FI sensibilities: at that time the FI wanted the franchise to be restricted to exclude immigrants with no parents born in New Caledonia, a concept which the RPCR rejected as undemocratic. Moreover, for Lemoine the referendum was not a pressing matter which demanded detailed exposition.¹⁰⁴

Lemoine realised that the validity of any new statute would be undermined in the absence of some form of cooperation between New Caledonian political leaders. During his speech he took the opportunity to propose negotiations with local parties over the forthcoming statute. Lemoine devoted his efforts in the following months to the organisation of multilateral discussions between the Government and the main New Caledonian parties. After considerable negotiation by government representatives, delegations from the FI, the FNSC, the RPCR and the Mauroy Government, agreed to converge on Nainville les Roches, in metropolitan France, for discussions from 8 to 12 July 1983. The Nainville les Roches discussions resulted in a joint declaration which was intended to provide the basis for a consensual solution to New Caledonia's future. (Appendix 2) The Government, the FI and the FNSC signed this declaration. The RPCR did not.

In the context of PS policy, the Government's signature to article 1 involved no change in its previously announced position. The willingness of signatories to confirm the abolition of the colonial heritage in New Caledonia and the recognition of the equality of Melanesian culture, with a role for custom law in forthcoming reforms, was in line with past statements promoting recognition of the territory's Melanesians. The recognition of the legitimacy of the "peuple kanak" and its innate right to independence in article 2 marked a reaffirmation of the PS's joint statement with the FI in 1979. The explicit recognition of the rights of non-Kanaks to participate in any self-determination referendum harked back to the joint FI/PS statement's reference to the just claims of the Kanak people and its willingness to recognise fundamental human rights under independence. Article 3 was the boldest undertaking, in that it committed the Government to a timetable on self-determination for the first time. The granting of greater administrative powers at territorial level was characterised as a desirable precondition to a referendum.

The principal shortcoming of the Nainville les Roches declaration was that the RPCR could not agree to its definitions. Apparent in objections voiced by the RPCR to the declaration was a divergent ideological frame of reference, of the sort discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The declaration's advocacy of "l'abolition du fait colonial", and "la légitimité du peuple kanak" was repugnant to RPCR leaders.¹⁰⁵ They did not accept that reference to colonialism was appropriate to statute discussions, and saw no need to confirm its abolition when New Caledonia had not constitutionally been a colony since the days of the Third Republic. Mention of the legitimacy of the Kanak people jarred on their Republican sensibilities. All citizens were considered equal under French law, and granting special recognition to one group in New Caledonia was regarded as an unsettling precedent. Just how the Kanak people might be defined was another point open to debate. RPCR leaders pointed out that while

the FI claimed to speak for Melanesians, not all Melanesians supported independence or thought of themselves as Kanaks. The most prominent example was Dick Ukeiwé, a Loyalty Islander who attended the Nainville les Roches negotiations as an RPCR delegate.

RPCR representatives had come to Nainville les Roches to discuss a new statute, not to be drawn into debate on self-determination conditions. In any case, the terms in which self-determination was mentioned were offensive to them. To recognise the innate right of Kanaks to independence was interpreted as provocative. To proceed to state that Kanaks recognised the rights of other ethnic groups in New Caledonia to participate in a self-determination vote was regarded as presumptuous. The right of non-Kanaks to vote was granted by the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, not by the FI, the self-appointed representative of Kanaks. By this stage, the RPCR was supportive of greater territorial autonomy, particularly if that autonomy would reduce Socialist Government control over New Caledonia.¹⁰⁶ But its representatives would neither admit the primacy of Kanak nationalism nor consent to a statute that might lead to independence.¹⁰⁷ Without the adherence of the RPCR, the Nainville les Roches declaration was a hollow accomplishment. Consensus could not be built without the cooperation of this major New Caledonian party.

For its part, the FI too soon became dissatisfied with the Nainville les Roches declaration. At the end of July, a joint statement by the UC, LKS, FULK and the PSC downplayed the importance of the declaration, calling it "une déclaration d'intention, d'ailleurs peu claire, du gouvernement français".¹⁰⁸ Suspicion remained that the Government was not really supportive of Kanak independence. There was some cause for this suspicion. Neither Mitterrand nor the Mauroy Government had offered the unreserved backing of Kanak independence that would have been preferred by the FI. That recognition of Kanaks' innate right to independence had been accorded was not indicative of backing for Kanak independence. Under French law the right of Kanaks to independence was no greater or lesser a right than that which any other segment of the population of the TOM enjoyed. The joint UC/LKS/FULK/PSC statement denounced ongoing government reforms as "une tentative de démobilisation du peuple kanak et d'une mise en place d'une politique contraire à son intérêt". To the contrary, the Nainville les Roches declaration was far from having a demobilising effect on Kanaks, as the joint statement itself reflected. As to whether the policy being implemented was contrary to Kanak interests, that remained to be seen. The reforms already undertaken by the Socialists had offered positive recognition of Kanak claims to social reform. The UC/LKS/FULK/PSC statement in addition expressed fears that the "propositions à Nainville les Roches concernant un statut d'autonomie transitoire vers l'Indépendance kanak Socialiste soient détournées vers une autonomie figée". This sentence was based on a possibly wilful misreading of the Nainville les Roches declaration, which had not described the new statute as a preliminary to Kanak independence, whether socialist or of any other nature. It was possible that Kanak independence would not be attained however, particularly if the FI found itself without the majority electoral support necessary to gain independence through a self-determination vote.

In the RPCR, reverse suspicions existed about the intentions of the Mauroy Government. It was assumed that the Mauroy Government intended to promote Kanak independence through the implementation of a transitional statute prior to a self-determination vote. Ukeiwé thundered against it in December 1983:

Qu'entendez-vous par statut évolutif et de transition? Evolutif vers quoi? L'anarchie politique? La politique des petits copains? Le malheur de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et ses habitants? L'effondrement économique et social? De transition? A nouveau, je vous demande vers quoi? La guerre civile? La

domination assurée des anglo-saxons ou pire encore des pays de l'Est, de Cuba?¹⁰⁹

The promulgation of what became known as the Lemoine Statute was followed by civil unrest from November 1984, but it was a campaign organised by Kanaks discontented with the pace and extent of Socialist recognition of their demands. The reforms alone could not justifiably be described as promoting chaos by recognising Kanak demands for independence.

Of the three main New Caledonian parties, only the FNSC seemed content with the Nainville les Roches declaration. It asserted, like Lemoine, that the document could form the basis of a consensual solution in New Caledonia. Christian Boissery, an FNSC spokesman, described his party colleagues as "les gardiens de l'esprit de Nainville",¹¹⁰ who would act as local mediators between the RPCR and the FI. Lemoine mistakenly took the Nainville les Roches declaration as a green light for further reform. He believed that the meeting had provided the basis for the consensus which he desired; "un véritable consensus qui est dans l'esprit et la sagesse des peuples du Pacifique Sud et qui est la forme océanienne de notre démocratie".¹¹¹ Lemoine pressed on after Nainville les Roches and tried to establish a new administrative base for New Caledonia, despite the fact its three main political parties remained at odds on the question of independence.

Consensus in New Caledonia was nevertheless not entirely absent from the territory following Nainville les Roches. Unfortunately, such consensus as existed took the form of opposition to the forthcoming statute. On 19 April 1984 the Territorial Assembly rejected the territorial statute bill by 32 votes to four.¹¹² It is a measure of the discontent of the FI and the RPCR that they were united in their opposition to Lemoine's proposals, albeit for different reasons. Included in the bill was mention of a self-determination referendum, scheduled for 1989. Lemoine had first mentioned this date for a referendum during his second visit to New Caledonia in November 1983.¹¹³ In conceding a date Lemoine offered more than Emmanuelli had, although Dijoud had offered the same date for self-determination as early as February 1979. For the FI, the statute proposals did not go far enough, while for the RPCR they went too far.

The Government showed no sign of being overly concerned by this vote. Its attitude was that Paris knew what was best and that reform would continue regardless. The following observation is illustrative of this attitude. It was made by François Massot, government reporter for the Constitutional Law Commission, while presenting the first reading of the statute bill to the National Assembly on 28 May 1984:

Ce statut [...] a été refusé par l'ensemble de l'assemblée territoriale, tant que par les indépendantistes que par le R.P.C.R. Mais ce refus démontre peut-être qu'il est dans la bonne voie. En effet, les juristes n'ont-ils pas l'habitude de dire qu'une bonne transaction est celle pour laquelle les deux parties sont mécontentes?¹¹⁴

In hindsight, this appears a dangerously complacent assessment, based on inappropriate, folksy logic. The simplistic attitude attributed to lawyers by Massot is more of an old aphorism than an accurate reflection of the complexities of the legal trade. At the time, the Government did not consider it extraordinary to ignore the Territorial Assembly's objections to the statute bill. The three major parties in Nouméa were at odds over the statute, and in the absence of a coherent majority response to its plans, the Mauroy Government decided to keep going. As has already been noted, the Territorial Assembly had no power of veto over government legislation, and this was not the first time that Paris had acted against the wishes of Nouméa. Conversely, because the Territorial Assembly had no power over government reforms, its members were prone to adopt extreme reactions in the knowledge that they were not responsible for their

consequences, as was seen in the absences and abstentions of Territorial Councillors during the vote on the Dijoud Plan. While government disregard of the Territorial Assembly was not out of the ordinary, it is impossible to conclude that Lemoine was instituting his reforms on the basis of the consensual discourse with territorial leaders which he had previously characterised as desirable. A more cautious politician might have discarded the statute bill and called for further negotiation, but at that time there was no reason to assume that the unpopularity of government reform would have any serious consequences.

The new territorial statute,¹¹⁵ known as the Lemoine Statute, was adopted by the National Assembly after its third and final reading on 31 July 1984, 14 days after Mauroy was replaced as Prime Minister by Laurent Fabius, leading a new Socialist Government. 321 Deputies, mainly from the PS and PC, voted for the statute, while 151, mainly UDF and RPR, voted against it.¹¹⁶ Communist support was offered because the statute was considered a preliminary step to self-determination, although the PC criticised the Government for not guaranteeing Kanak self-determination.¹¹⁷ RPR and UDF criticisms were that the statute did not delegate sufficient autonomy to the Territorial Assembly, and was discriminatory in promoting Melanesian culture above others.¹¹⁸

The first article of the statute created a State-Territory Committee charged with preparing the conditions for the self-determination referendum, and declared that "A l'issue d'un délai de cinq ans, les populations de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et dépendances seront consultées par voie de référendum conformément aux dispositions de l'article 53, alinéa 3, de la Constitution".¹¹⁹ The Government in this way applied the Capitane Doctrine formulated and used by its Gaullist and Giscardian forebears in the 1960s and 1970s. This step was in accordance with established constitutional usage, and past statements by the PS and Mitterrand on self-determination. The FI took exception to the terms of this article, as it did not offer the Kanak independence which it claimed that the Nainville les Roches declaration had recognised. It asserted that the innate and active right of Kanaks to independence set out in the Nainville les Roches declaration established the FI as a privileged partner, a debatable and controversial position.¹²⁰ The FI called for electoral reform which would assure a pro-independence vote of a majority in New Caledonia. In February 1984 Eloi Machoro, the Secretary-General of the UC, announced that he had sent a telegramme to Mitterrand on behalf of the FI urging the repatriation of all non-indigenous inhabitants opposed to independence.¹²¹ For the FI the "populations intéressées" in any self-determination vote, as referred to by article 53 of the Constitution, would have to be predominantly pro-independence, regardless of whether actions taken against French loyalists constituted an infringement of their civil liberties under French law. It was an unrealistic stance to which the Mauroy Government could not accede. The mass deportation from New Caledonia of French citizens, on the basis of their political views would have been illegal. Determining just who would be eligible to vote was a controversial issue which was not to be durably resolved until 1988.

Article 3 defined six new custom regions, each of which would have its own tribal council, in order to give Melanesian custom authority a greater role in territorial administration. In this respect, it was true, as the RPR and UDF claimed, that the statute promoted Melanesian culture above others. The Mauroy Government instituted this recognition of custom authority to give Melanesian tribal leaders a greater role in the French administration in New Caledonia. While the majority of tribal leaders supported the FI, this article was not unambiguously to the advantage of the Front. Those tribal leaders who sympathised with the Front did not necessarily agree with the concept of the foundation of a unified Kanak people to the detriment of tribal identity. While traditional Wallisian and Tahitian society was not given statutory recognition similar to that of indigenous Melanesians in New Caledonia, it could be argued

that the proper place for such institutional recognition was in Wallis and Futuna and in French Polynesia. The territorial statute of each TOM either accorded similar recognition to traditional culture, in the case of Wallis and Futuna, or was on the verge of doing so, in the case of French Polynesia, for which a new statute bill had also been formulated.¹²² Freedom of religion and rights of free association were not threatened by the statute bill and non-indigenous immigrant groups were able to continue to promote their cultural interests through church groups, clubs and associations. European residents were not threatened by the creation of custom regions. French law, French education and French cultural values continued to play the pre-eminent role in New Caledonian life, as evidenced by the formulation, debate and promulgation of article 3 by a group of French parliamentarians in Paris. That objections to the ex officio presence of Wallisian kings in the territorial administration of Wallis and Futuna were not raised by RPR and UDF politicians was indicative of the degree of politicisation of the question of recognising traditional indigenous authority in New Caledonia by 1984. Recognition of Melanesian custom by the Mauroy Government was portrayed by the UDF and RPR as a threat to the Republic in New Caledonia, even if not all Melanesian chiefs were necessarily followers of the FI or of Kanak independence.

Article 4 stipulated that the territory would be responsible in any field not reserved to the State under Article 5. However the list in article 5 was considerably longer than the list of state powers outlined in the statute of 1976. While the State ceded some powers to the territory, namely in the areas of secondary education, and audiovisual communication, it retained the bulk of its powers under the statute of 1976, and expanded its controls to some new areas. The responsibilities retained were over foreign relations, immigration, external communications, finance, defence, law and order, civil law to the exclusion of custom law and commercial law, justice and the organisation of the judiciary, the state public service and communal administration.¹²³ State control of territorial natural resources was expanded. Under the 1976 statute, Paris had controlled only mineral resources. The Lemoine Statute broadened this definition to encompass "exploration, exploitation, conservation et gestion des ressources naturelles, biologiques et non-biologiques".¹²⁴ This all-encompassing description of anything that could be found on land or under the sea demonstrated that the Governments of Mauroy and Fabius did not immediately intend to surrender state control of territorial resources. The State also retained command of the implementation of Emmanuelli's ordinances. Paris was reluctant to let control of these reforms fall into territorial hands, for fear that a hostile administration might stall them, although it did leave open provision for passing the ODIL, OCSTC and the Land Office to the territory should it ask and should Paris agree.¹²⁵ Globally, state powers over New Caledonia were not greatly changed by the Lemoine Statute, despite some tinkering with previous legislation. The RPR and the UDF were justified in pointing out the statute's lack of decentralisation, although neither party had made much effort in this area either when previously in government.

Greater innovation was to be found in the legislation's reorganisation of territorial institutions, although it is doubtful that this reorganisation lived up to Massot's claim of being a "véritable décentralisation" of the territory.¹²⁶ The High Commissioner was replaced as the head of New Caledonia by a Territorial President, elected by the Territorial Assembly. A Regional Assembly ("assemblée des pays") was created, composed of 24 communal representatives, and 24 custom representatives,¹²⁷ as was an Economic Expansion Committee, representing business and labour.¹²⁸ The Regional Assembly and the Economic Expansion Committee were intended to be consultative bodies which would advise the territory on legislation within their respective fields of competence.¹²⁹ Certain similarities can be seen between the new administrative structure and that

erected in September 1984 under the Internal Autonomy Statute for French Polynesia, notably the new post of Territorial President.

The Lemoine Statute was a major undertaking for the Government, and for New Caledonia, but was to founder on territorial opposition which Paris had underestimated during the preparation of the legislation. Kanak opposition to government reforms was to lead to a level of political violence and civil unrest in New Caledonia which Lemoine could not have foreseen.

Kanak disaffection with the Government intensified during the months leading up to the adoption of the Lemoine Statute. Pidjot criticised the statute bill during its three readings in the National Assembly.¹³⁰ He repeated earlier criticisms that the statute did not guarantee rapid progress toward independence, and attempted to amend the bill so that independence could be attained in 1985, without necessarily having recourse to a popular referendum.¹³¹ Pidjot also proposed that only permanent New Caledonian residents, and those inhabitants who had a locally born parent, should be eligible to participate in the self-determination referendum. The electoral balance was such in 1984 that voters who supported independence constituted a clear minority of the New Caledonian electorate, reflected by the FI's possession of only a relative majority of 14 out of 36 seats in the Territorial Assembly. Were the self-determination referendum to be open to all New Caledonian voters, then the majority vote would in all likelihood oppose independence.

The aim to tip the electoral balance in favour of the FI's cause was impractical, contentious, and extremely provocative to migrant French loyalists who would have been excluded from voting by its terms. Pidjot's amendments were rejected by the Law Commission as undemocratic. Lemoine described them as unconstitutional, in that they would deprive some French citizens of their voting rights.¹³² No compensation for the electoral disadvantage that immigration had created for Kanaks was contemplated by the Government in 1984, as Pidjot pointed out.¹³³ The Government had backed away from Mitterrand's statement in November 1979 that the minority status of Melanesians should be considered alongside the fact that immigration was its cause. The Socialist Government found itself defending a situation which the PS had criticised in opposition. Had the Government acceded to Pidjot's amendments, the Opposition would have had recourse to the Constitutional Council, and discord within New Caledonia would have increased to a dangerous level.

Pidjot's discontent was such that he withdrew from the Socialist group in the National Assembly in June 1984.¹³⁴ This decision was followed by the FI's announcement at the end of July that to protest at government refusal to implement legislation to the advantage of Kanak voters in the self-determination referendum, it was withdrawing from territorial institutions, and would boycott the territorial elections scheduled for November 1984.¹³⁵ Faced with the absence of absolute majority support from the territorial electorate, the FI radicalised its opposition in its own self-interest.

The nadir of Lemoine's time as Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM came with the foundation of the FLNKS on 24 September 1984. Formed from the FI (with the notable exception of LKS, which believed the new formation was extremist, naïve and irresponsible), the FLNKS adopted a more militant approach in protesting Socialist Governments' lack of support for Kanak electoral primacy, and in announcing the goal of independence by 1985. The election boycott became part of what the FLNKS referred to in its charter as a "lutte de libération nationale".¹³⁶ The FLNKS resolved to force the issue by setting up a provisional government of Kanaky which would unilaterally declare independence, and called on Kanaks to organise "la conquête de la liberté".¹³⁷ Accusing the Mauroy Government of being in league with the forces of colonialism in New Caledonia, the FLNKS broke off dialogue with Lemoine.

Much of the FLNKS's position consisted of little more than vehement hyperbole as it did not enjoy the means by which it might convert its

revolutionary rhetoric into concerted armed struggle. The FLNKS faced a lack of resources which set it apart from the circumstances of the Algerian national liberation movement of the 1950s. The support base that the FLNKS claimed, namely indigenous Melanesians, was far less imposing than the millions from whom the FLN had drawn its support. The FLNKS was hindered by the culturally segmented, undeveloped nature of the indigenous Melanesian population in New Caledonia, which constituted 42.56% of the territorial population in 1983.¹³⁸ Of the 61,870 indigenous Melanesians recorded in that year's census, 42% were under the age of 15.¹³⁹ While the FLNKS described its support base as "le peuple kanak", indigenous Melanesians were in fact far from constituting a homogeneous group: they belonged to 319 tribes, speaking between them 27 different languages.¹⁴⁰ Supporters of the FLNKS tended to be found in the least-developed parts of the territory. In 1983, 73% of indigenous Melanesians lived in tribal societies in the rural hinterland, which relied on collective, subsistence agriculture. This setting offered an unpromising base for the socialist nation-state heralded by the FLNKS. Although no statistics exist concerning the number of FLNKS activists who participated in militant protests from late 1984, it was likely no more than several hundred Kanaks operated at the sharp end of conflict during the boycotts organised by the Front in 1984 and 1988. These militants were not very well armed. Many of their number carried shotguns or hunting rifles for which ammunition was in short supply. Apart from the 17 Kanak activists who received six weeks' training of an unspecified nature in Libya from September to October 1984,¹⁴¹ the FLNKS is not known to have arranged a military training programme. Its militants' only prior contact with military life usually consisted of time spent in compulsory French military service.

Melanesian political divisions represented another challenge to the concept of a unified Kanak people. The FLNKS itself was an electoral coalition of five parties, three lobby groups and a trade union.¹⁴² While it was demonstrated in the regional elections of 1985 that a large majority of Melanesian voters backed the concept of Kanak sovereignty, not all of them supported the FLNKS. In 1984 the LKS was the most prominent Kanak party to reject the Front's claim to represent Kanaks. Still other Melanesians, estimated to represent around 20% of indigenous voters in 1985, rejected Kanak nationalism in preference to French loyalist parties, usually the RPCR.¹⁴³

On 1st December 1984 the FLNKS announced the establishment of the provisional government of Kanaky. The administration was a self-appointed one of dubious democratic legitimacy. While the term provisional government held an imposing air, in reality the body was a skeletal structure unsuited to governing New Caledonia, even in the unlikely circumstances that it found itself in that position. It was not until the second FLNKS congress in February 1985 that the roles of the provisional government and its subordinate structures were defined in the most general terms. The Front did not have a detailed vision of what its Republic of Kanaky would be like, and had formulated neither social nor economic policies. Tjibaou, the president of the provisional government, was at the head of a shadow structure lacking in substance, power or effective authority. The several hundred poorly armed, loosely organised activists it could muster for militant action did not pose a threat to French sovereignty over New Caledonia.

Any chance of achieving the territorial consensus which Lemoine had hoped to cement had been greatly reduced by the time of his unproductive third visit to New Caledonia in October 1984. The FLNKS refused to talk to him. The RPCR, contemplating its almost certain dominance of the Territorial Assembly as a result of the FLNKS election boycott, moderated its opposition in its own self-interest. The party pressed Lemoine for an assurance that law and order would be maintained during the territorial elections.¹⁴⁴ This was done with some difficulty. The FLNKS active boycott of the territorial elections on 18

November 1984 caused considerable setbacks for the Government. Only 50.13% of voters turned out. (Table 7) None the less, the boycott did not succeed in invalidating the elections. FLNKS roadblocks, pickets and occupations of rural polling booths were not widespread enough to justify a postponement of polling. The RPCR succeeded in sweeping the electoral field, gaining 34 of 42 seats as a result of the absence of the FLNKS from the ballot and the mass desertion of voters from the FNSC. The FNSC, representing "les gardiens de l'esprit de Nainville" had collapsed and was reduced to one seat. It was clear from the result of the elections that an overwhelming majority of the FNSC's supporters had deserted it because of its dialogue with the Socialists and the FLNKS gained six seats, on a moderate pro-independence platform, but this was scarcely sufficient basis for Lemoine's consensus-building. The centre ground in New Caledonian politics looked very unstable, faced with polarisation toward Melanesian nationalism on one hand, and RPCR conservatism on the other.

By late November 1984 the Fabius Government, showing signs of panic, announced the need to accelerate the self-determination process in New Caledonia. Lemoine proposed holding the referendum before 1986.¹⁴⁵ It seemed by that stage that staving off the referendum had been the cause of New Caledonia's mounting troubles and that an abrupt change of tack might yet preserve peace. The Government did not respond to UDF and RPR claims that postponing the referendum further might serve better to keep the peace. The Socialists acted to satisfy Kanak demands rather than those of French loyalists. However this step was unlikely to calm the FLNKS. In the absence of electoral reforms designed to give Kanaks an absolute majority, a more immediate self-determination vote would not satisfy the Front's nationalist agenda and would lead to greater disillusionment with French institutions. Lemoine would in any case be incapable of engineering the cooperation necessary for setting up a referendum considering that he had resoundingly failed to inspire confidence in his statute. His assessment of New Caledonia remained out of tune with developments there. New Caledonia's situation had moved from the problematic to the critical. There were gloomy forecasts of impending armed insurrection.¹⁴⁶ Lemoine, and the Government he represented, were at an impasse.

Pisani: from Delegate to Minister

The provisional government of Kanaky may not have had the means to convert its proclamation of a national liberation struggle into armed resistance which would overthrow French sovereignty, although it did have the potential to force concessions from Paris. Its existence posed an embarrassment to the Fabius Government, which was pilloried by the Opposition for not dissolving the Front as a threat to Republican law and order. On 4 December 1984, to cries of "Pauvre Lemoine!" from the RPR benches, Fabius announced to the National Assembly that he would be assuming personal responsibility for the New Caledonian portfolio.¹⁴⁷ While this decision was a measure of the extent to which Lemoine had failed to resolve New Caledonia's increasing difficulties, it also indicated the extent to which FLNKS activism had gained the attention of the highest authorities in Paris. No longer was New Caledonia the peripheral, neglected area it had been on the French political landscape in 1981. The territory's troubles, compounded by an increasing law and order problem as Kanak militancy prompted conservative reaction, were propelled to the centre stage of French political debate.

At the time of the announcement by Fabius, his Government's new special delegate to New Caledonia had just arrived in Nouméa. Edgard Pisani was best known for his term as Minister of Agriculture under de Gaulle in the early 1960s. Pisani assumed the functions which were normally the reserve of the High Commissioner in Nouméa, as well as being assigned by Mitterrand the

**Table 7. New Caledonian Territorial Elections
1984**

Territorial Results: 18 November

Registered voters	79,271
Votes cast	39,735
Turnout	50.13%
Valid votes	39,296

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPCR	27,871	70.14	34
LKS	2,879	7.25	6
FN	2,379	5.99	1
FNSC	1,748	4.40	1
Others	4,439	11.17	0

Source: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 20 novembre 1984,
20 novembre 1984.

task of restoring law and order in New Caledonia, and to formulate reform proposals. Fabius summarised Pisani's mission: "dans un délai de deux mois [...] de mettre en œuvre les mesures nécessaires concernant l'évolution institutionnelle, le développement économique, social et culturel du territoire ainsi que les modalités selon lesquelles sera exercé le droit à l'autodétermination".¹⁴⁸

In the atmosphere then reigning in New Caledonia, this would be no easy task. On 25 November, the FLNKS had selected its provisional government of Kanaky, and on 1 December had installed its President, Jean-Marie Tjibaou. Over 20 gendarmes had been injured during and immediately after the FLNKS boycott of the territorial elections.¹⁴⁹ Pisani's predecessor, High Commissioner Jacques Roynette, had banned public assemblies and had received 130 additional gendarmes from Paris on 24 November.¹⁵⁰ Their presence failed to quell the politically-motivated violence which continued in the wake of the territorial elections.¹⁵¹ FLNKS roadblocks erected for the election boycott remained as points of confrontation with French gendarmes. Farmhouses and homes were sacked and burnt down by Kanak militants. The circling of the mining centre of Thio by Eloi Machoro, the Security Minister of the FLNKS provisional government, and a band of his followers, caused the hurried organisation of local militias by French loyalists in other rural centres. Armed confrontation led to the death of two Kanaks and two Europeans at the end of November.¹⁵²

The man who faced these and more deep-seated problems in New Caledonia had no knowledge of the territory prior to his appointment.¹⁵³ Pisani's introduction to New Caledonia came in the form of some visits to ministerial officials in Paris during the days before his departure. Pisani complemented these meetings with a reading of official files during his flight to Nouméa in the presidential jet.¹⁵⁴ This hasty acquaintance with territorial issues was not an auspicious base on which to formulate answers to New Caledonian political divisions. The expectation that these divisions could be overcome by an appointee with no prior experience of the territory, whose knowledge of the issues consisted of a few days spent perusing ministerial files and conversing with officials in Paris, was an optimistic one.

In his favour, Pisani had long experience working on Third World economic development. He had also gained a reputation as an innovative administrator during his time as Agriculture Minister, helping to modernise the conservative outlooks of various rural pressure groups which stubbornly resisted change. In spite of these specific, technocratic qualifications, his appointment as government delegate to New Caledonia appeared incongruous. Pisani was neither a government employee prior to his appointment, nor an expert on New Caledonia. A high official from the DOM-TOM Ministry with experience in New Caledonia might have been a better choice to replace the High Commissioner. It might have seemed odd that Mitterrand should have entrusted this sensitive post to a former Gaullist Minister whose main link with the PS was his friendship with Michel Rocard, then Minister of Agriculture, and one of Mitterrand's greatest rivals.

Part of the explanation as to why Pisani was appointed delegate to New Caledonia resides in the fact that he was an outsider. Two Secretaries of State had already had their reputations harmed by the declining fortunes of New Caledonia. If Pisani experienced reverses, this setback would not directly affect the Fabius Government in the same way as if a third Socialist Minister were overseeing the territory. The supervisory role over the New Caledonian portfolio exercised by Fabius demonstrated greater government concern for the territory while also installing a control mechanism over Pisani should he fail. Additionally, as a former Gaullist Minister, it was hoped that Pisani would be more easily able to communicate with New Caledonia's conservatives. Initially this was the case, but it was not to last.

Pisani's appointment was not without precedent. Almost thirty years before, another Socialist Government had chosen a maverick Gaullist to serve it as proconsul in a troublesome territory. Like Mitterrand's appointment of Pisani, the choice by Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France of Jacques Soustelle as Governor-General to Algeria in January 1955 constituted an original response to a difficult situation. Like Pisani, Soustelle's instructions were to continue ongoing government reforms and to settle ethnic tensions between European conservatives and pro-independence indigenes.¹⁵⁵ Again like Soustelle, Pisani failed, unable to reconcile the conflicting interests of these groups.

While his Gaullist pedigree was beyond reproach, Pisani no longer associated with Gaullist leaders, having abandoned the movement in the late 1960s. Although the question of independence in Algeria in the 1950s differed substantially from the prospects for New Caledonian independence in the 1980s, his imaginative approach to reform turned out to be as unacceptable to New Caledonian conservatives as Soustelle's had been to French Algerians. Pisani, a man who described himself as "un adversaire de la droite conservatrice",¹⁵⁶ was to find this out by experience. Original thinking demonstrated by Pisani over New Caledonia became anathema to local conservatives, who wished to preserve their social and electoral dominance. To Pisani's dismay,¹⁵⁷ his novel solutions to local troubles were to earn him the status of the most hated government representative in the territory during the 1980s.¹⁵⁸

Yet in December 1984 there still appeared to be some room for manoeuvre for the Fabius Government. While endeavouring to maintain law and order, the Government did not heed calls from Pons and other RPR representatives to dissolve the provisional government of Kanaky.¹⁵⁹ Mitterrand was perhaps mindful of his time as Minister of the Interior in 1954, when he had advocated, and obtained, repression of a nationalist insurrection in Algeria and the dissolution of the party at its head.¹⁶⁰ His intransigent refusal to negotiate with Algerian nationalists in 1954 had not forced an end of their claims. With the FLNKS, his response was more measured. As in Algeria, he had no intention of abandoning French territory, and aimed to uphold Republican law.¹⁶¹ However, this time, some attempt was made via Pisani to defuse local nationalist tensions through government negotiation and concessions.

The first priority for Pisani was to re-establish law and order. In the first week of December, he negotiated an agreement with the FLNKS which involved the lifting of Kanak roadblocks in exchange for the release of 17 activists held in police custody.¹⁶² His chances of implementing this agreement seemed seriously diminished by the ambush of unarmed FLNKS members near Hienghène on 5 December. The ambush, made by a group of Europeans and métis, resulted in the death of ten Kanaks, including two of Tjibaou's brothers. In spite of the provocation to further violence this ambush could have represented for the FLNKS, the coalition honoured its agreement with Pisani. By 12 December, Fabius was able to inform the National Assembly that the last of the FLNKS barricades, around Thio, had been lifted.¹⁶³ Law and order had been restored and road communications in rural areas were reopened.

The leaders of the Kanak national liberation struggle did not turn out to be as unswervingly militant as might have been believed from a reading of the FLNKS charter. Halting their campaign of disruption in exchange for a minor prisoner release, and the hope that Pisani might be receptive to Kanak demands for independence, were not traits characteristic of the conduct of a relentless campaign against French colonialism as prescribed by the FLNKS charter. The FLNKS executive resolved that the provisional government would gain political stature in Paris by not retaliating for the ambush at Hienghène.¹⁶⁴ A belated realisation that the provisional government of Kanaky was of an embryonic nature and was not prepared to push confrontation to the extent of possibly provoking civil war may well also have played a part in its restraint.

The peace remained fragile throughout December while Pisani conducted his consultations with local leaders over the future of New Caledonia. He did so in the most difficult of situations. He had been assigned the unenviable position of negotiating with two fiercely antagonistic camps, polarised over the issue of independence. The FNSC had been marginalised as a force for moderation by its losses in the territorial elections, and although Pisani appreciated the moderation shown by the LKS, he was aware that its electoral strength was insufficient to play a determining role in negotiations.¹⁶⁵

By this stage, New Caledonia had become a *cause célèbre* for the parliamentary opposition in Paris, a portfolio which for them was symptomatic of the purported inability of Socialist Governments to govern. Acting as the self-appointed guardians of French Republicanism, the UDF and the RPR united in attacking the Fabius Government's handling of New Caledonia.¹⁶⁶ On 21 December, Giscard d'Estaing and six former Prime Ministers¹⁶⁷ from the two parties issued a joint statement condemning the conduct of government policy, accusing Fabius and his Ministers of wishing to subvert the self-determination process and Republican law to the interests of Kanak nationalism, thus endangering French sovereignty over New Caledonia. Neither the RPR nor the UDF were formally opposed to a self-determination referendum, but both harboured the suspicion that the Government would rig it to the advantage of the FLNKS.¹⁶⁸

The key issue was to whom the Government would apply the expression "peuples intéressés", mentioned in article 53 of the Constitution. RPR and UDF fears were not calmed by Mitterrand's statement on TF1 on 16 December 1984 that he favoured "l'émancipation" of New Caledonia "sous une forme d'autonomie ou d'indépendance" that the territory "doit définir lui-même".¹⁶⁹ This was evidence that the Fabius Government was discarding the reluctance of the Mauroy Government to discuss independence in some form, paradoxically at a time of greater violence than in earlier years, when it had previously held back on the question so as not to provoke strife. FI and later FLNKS activism had largely been effective in forcing the issue.

The willingness of the Fabius Government to contemplate the issue of self-determination and some form of independence for New Caledonia gained it the ear of the FLNKS, but caused the RPCR to cut off dialogue.¹⁷⁰ The RPCR refused to negotiate with Pisani throughout December. For its leaders the Fabius Government was working in league with the FLNKS to push New Caledonia into independence. Lafleur referred to New Caledonia as being "en état de légitime-défense".¹⁷¹ Considering the financial and logistical support of Lafleur and the RPCR for rural militias in November and December,¹⁷² these words were not empty rhetoric.

Pisani announced his Propositions for New Caledonia (hereafter the Pisani Plan) on 7 January 1985.¹⁷³ He proposed a self-determination referendum for July 1985, thus confirming the government decision in November 1984 to hold one before 1986. Pisani also proposed that the referendum should exclude any voters who had resided in the territory less than three years. This formula had already been used for the self-determination referendum that had led to the independence of Djibouti in 1977. The referendum was only a partial concession to changing FLNKS demands, which by late November 1984 involved "une consultation référendaire qui ne fait appel qu'au seul peuple kanak".¹⁷⁴ In spite of RPR and UDF claims that the Government was contemplating otherwise, Pisani had no intention of restricting the franchise to Kanaks,¹⁷⁵ for the reason that such a move would have been in violation of article 3 of the Constitution.¹⁷⁶

Pisani announced that should an absolute majority of voters back independence, the Government would grant it by January 1986. This prospect was regarded with horror by the RPCR, the RPR, and the UDF, although it was by no means a foregone conclusion. An estimated 5,500 of New Caledonia's

79,271 voters would be excluded from the referendum, a number insufficient to reduce local majority support for continued ties with France evident in past territorial elections.¹⁷⁷ Nor ultimately was the FLNKS satisfied by the kind of independence that Pisani offered. The form that independence would take, "indépendance-association", entailed the continuation of a French presence in New Caledonia. The Republic would maintain control over defence and foreign relations, and those New Caledonians who desired to remain French could do so, while the rest could opt for Kanak citizenship.

The Pisani Plan entailed a compromise solution to three interests: the intention of the Fifth Republic to retain a geostrategic presence in New Caledonia; the desire of New Caledonian loyalists to remain French; and the demands of Kanak nationalism. Pisani aimed, by partially meeting the interests of the State, Kanaks and French loyalists, to bridge the gap between the interests of French and Kanak nationalism. Pisani's compromise was unsatisfactory to both the FLNKS and the RPCR. The FLNKS wanted a fully sovereign Kanaky with administrative authority over the territorial economy, resources, defence and foreign relations. The Front announced that the Pisani Plan represented a neo-colonialist solution, whereby France would retain sovereignty in all but name.¹⁷⁸ The RPCR for its part pointed out that once independence was granted, there would be no guarantee that New Caledonia would maintain its association with France, should an FLNKS-dominated government opt to sever links.¹⁷⁹ This was a point validated by French experience of decolonisation in Algeria. The Evian Accords negotiated between France and the FLN in 1962 before Algerian independence had granted France the maintenance of certain strategic interests and accorded privileges to French citizens who wished to remain in Algeria after independence, although these provisions were abandoned by the FLN once in power.¹⁸⁰

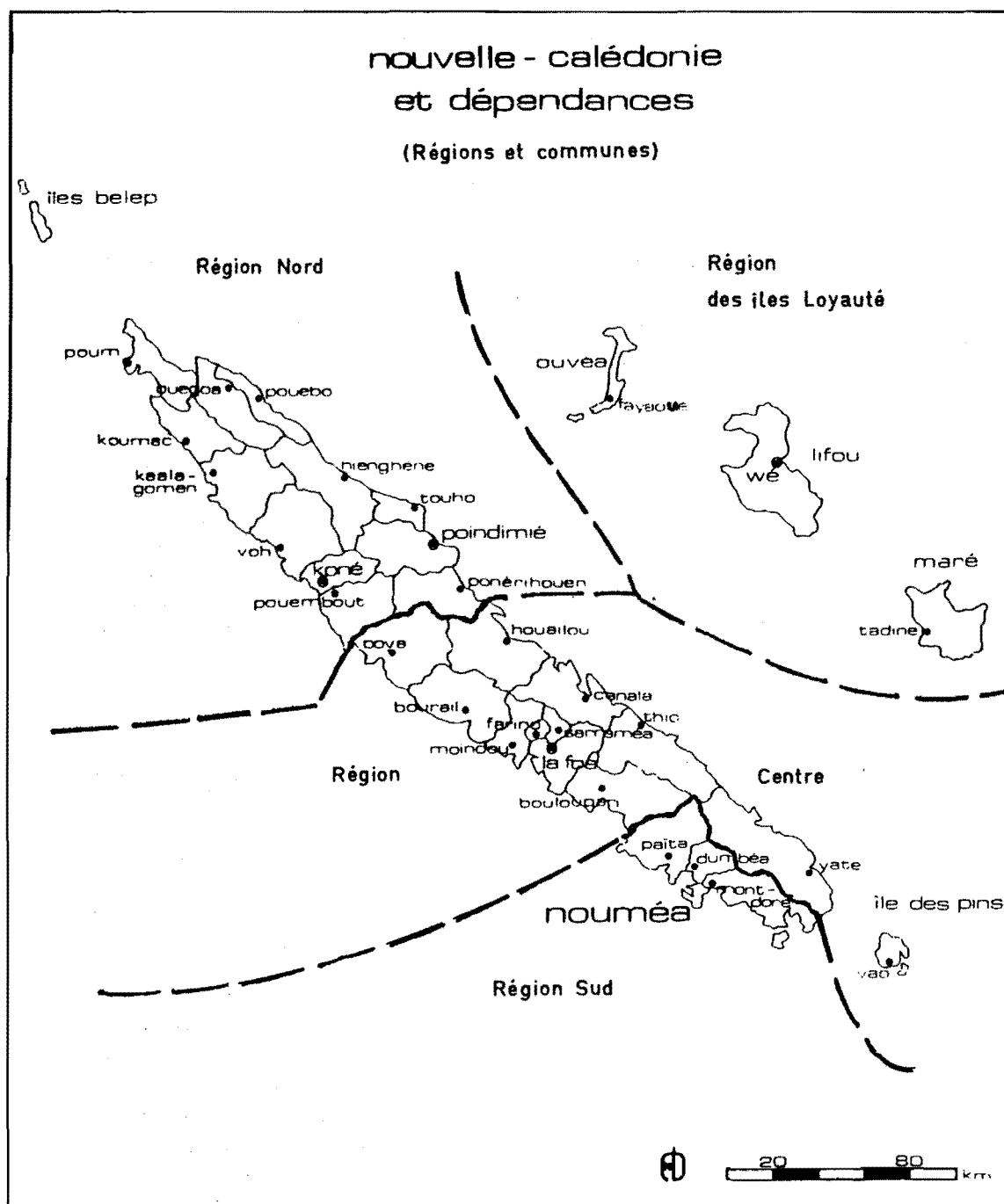
Whatever agreement Pisani had hoped to inspire turned improbable as a result of two shooting incidents that alienated both Kanaks and French loyalists days after the announcement of the Pisani Plan. The FLNKS cut off dialogue with Pisani after the fatal shooting of Machoro and an associate, Marcel Nonnaro, by members of the elite GIGN near La Foa on 12 January 1985. Controversy persists over the details of this incident.¹⁸¹ The FLNKS and its supporters claimed the deaths constituted the murder of unarmed men giving themselves up.¹⁸² The GIGN claimed that the pair were armed and hostile at the time of their deaths, which were the result of poor marksmanship intended to wound rather than kill. The FLNKS blamed Pisani for having given express orders to kill Machoro. Pisani denies this, although he does not completely rule out the possibility that their deaths might not have been accidental.¹⁸³ Whatever the truth of the matter, the incident irreparably harmed relations between Pisani and the FLNKS.

The RPCR, for its part, was further disillusioned with Pisani by the fatal shooting near Bouloupari on 11 January 1985 of Yves Tual, a Caldoche teenager, by a Kanak. While the party took the opportunity to condemn Pisani further for failing to maintain law and order, conservative militants rioting on the streets of Nouméa aggravated the situation by causing additional lawlessness.¹⁸⁴

Pisani's response was to use his powers as state representative to declare a state of emergency. Public assemblies were banned, a curfew was declared, the transport of arms and munitions was forbidden, and the right to deport anyone deemed a threat to public order was invoked.¹⁸⁵ These were not promising conditions under which to continue negotiations to determine calmly the future of the territory.

Mitterrand attempted to lessen tensions by visiting New Caledonia on 17 January, but this effort was largely ineffectual. Such a brief visit could not hope to remedy Pisani's increasing isolation from local leaders. The trip had greater effect as a media coup, and as a riposte to opposition accusations that Mitterrand and the Fabius Government were neglecting New Caledonia. However the

**Map 3. Regions Established by the
Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute
1985**



Source: DTSEE: *Schéma de l'économie néo-calédonienne*
1985.

presidential visit gave local conservatives an opportune target for their discontent, and they took the chance to organise large protest demonstrations.¹⁸⁶

For all his troubles, Pisani remained optimistic about the chances of implementing his plan.¹⁸⁷ By March 1985, a more cautious administrator might have decided to adopt a reticent approach towards talk of independence, given the adverse reaction this word had already provoked. Heedless of the wishes of New Caledonian loyalists, Pisani was by this stage publicly convinced that New Caledonia's independence was historically "inélucltable".¹⁸⁸ Like Lemoine, he possessed a misplaced optimism about his capacity to inspire consensus in New Caledonia. This optimism was to last beyond his official removal from Nouméa by the Government.¹⁸⁹ Like Lemoine, Pisani had trouble calming political unrest in New Caledonia, although it is difficult to ascertain what solution could have satisfied both local nationalists and conservatives in 1985.

One of the consequences of Mitterrand's visit to New Caledonia was that he witnessed the gulf between Pisani and New Caledonians, whether Kanak or loyalist.¹⁹⁰ He responded almost immediately. The President announced on his return to Paris that "le délégué du gouvernement complétera et précisera les propositions qu'il a faites le 7 janvier".¹⁹¹ This was the first indication of revisions which were to lead to an overhaul of the Pisani Plan overseen by Fabius. Pisani was aware of hesitations by Fabius over his plan and consequently sent his suggestions for revisions directly to Mitterrand on 26 March.¹⁹² Pisani suggested to Mitterrand that the referendum should take place in September 1985, with independence by the end of 1987 should New Caledonians thus choose. This recommendation was ignored.¹⁹³

The definitive course of action decided on in Paris was announced by Fabius after a meeting of the Council of Ministers on 25 April 1985. The self-determination referendum would be deferred until after the legislative elections in 1986, but would occur before 31 December 1987.¹⁹⁴ The Government postponed the self-determination referendum to calm the situation in New Caledonia. While the FLNKS might not be satisfied, the action was intended to quieten opposition claims that New Caledonia was too rapidly being led to independence. In doing so, the Government postponed the issue of independence without resolving any of the fundamental differences between Kanaks and French loyalists in the territory. There was no likelihood of Paris meeting the FLNKS demand for a vote restricted to Kanaks. The fact that a referendum would still take place did not satisfy the RPCR position that the vote was unnecessary, as the FLNKS did not have the backing of an absolute majority of the territorial electorate, and that a referendum might be divisive if the Socialists decided to erode loyalist electoral predominance by restricting voting rights. In the interim, another transitional statute would be introduced to replace the Lemoine Plan. This new legislation was to respond to Kanak demands for autonomy by granting greater administrative responsibilities to the New Caledonian regions. This response was perceived by the Opposition as indicative of government indecisiveness and as an unmerited concession offered to a rowdy minority which had shown scant consideration for state authority.

Despite its postponement, the President was not reluctant to hold a self-determination referendum. At this stage, Mitterrand did not share the conservative view that setting up a referendum for New Caledonia might lead to self-determination claims in the rest of the DOM-TOM. He stated at the ministerial meeting on 25 April 1985:

Je suis tout prêt à soumettre à chaque territoire, tous les deux ou trois ans, un vote sur l'indépendance. Je suis assuré que d'ici longtemps ils choisiront le maintien dans la République française.¹⁹⁵

Pisani was replaced while preparations for the new territorial statute were being debated. He was no longer needed in Nouméa by the Fabius Government,

and his continued presence there would only prompt further resentment from his local opponents. The Government adroitly removed him by promoting him to the newly-created post of Minister to New Caledonia, which he assumed on 24 May 1985.¹⁹⁶ This promotion was in effect a face-saving measure on the part of the Government. To dismiss Pisani outright would have constituted an admission of failure. While the official explanation of the appointment was that Pisani was needed in Paris for the preparation of the statute bill, Fabius had already decided his own orientation for the new statute. The post of Minister to New Caledonia itself was exceptional in the extreme: no other French region with fewer than 200,000 inhabitants could claim to have a Minister devoted solely to its affairs. Under Pisani, the New Caledonian portfolio attained unprecedented status in Paris. Emmanuelli and Lemoine had been Secretaries of State, junior ministers subordinate to Gaston Defferre, the Minister to the Interior, for whom New Caledonia was a minor, if delicate, component of the DOM-TOM portfolio. After the appointment of the Chirac Government in March 1986, New Caledonia returned to being a component of this wider portfolio, although it was overseen by a fully fledged Minister to the DOM-TOM.

The definitive statute,¹⁹⁷ an amalgam of the Pisani Plan and of new ideas overseen by Fabius (hereafter, the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute), superseded much of the Lemoine Statute. The new statute was intended to give the rural Melanesian population greater territorial representation. Article 3 created four new regional boundaries which were drawn up in such a way as to permit Kanak control over at least two and possibly three of them. (See Map 3) Each of these regions would be self-administering under article 4, and would have their own councils. Under article 22, the Regional Councils were responsible for their own agricultural and maritime resources, public works, cultural development, housing, health, industry, professional training and primary education.

In increasing regional powers, the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute was designed to decrease the influence of the Territorial Assembly (renamed the Territorial Congress) on regional development. The Territorial Congress also had its powers reduced by the re-establishment of the High Commissioner as the head of the territorial executive under article 25, a reversal of the situation created by the Lemoine Statute. Article 27 allowed the Government to legislate once more by ordinance, until 15 November 1985, in order to set up the Regional Councils, finalise the definition of territorial responsibilities, and to further territorial development in general. Government recourse to ordinances was aimed at circumventing the absolute majority enjoyed by the RPCR in the Territorial Assembly prior to the regional elections scheduled for September, as well as intended to circumvent to some extent parliamentary opposition in Paris, opposition which had already caused delays in the statute bill's implementation.

The PS was the only major party in the National Assembly which voted for the statute bill. The PC, which until then had voted for Socialist reforms in New Caledonia while criticising them for not promoting rapid decolonisation, had lost patience. The Communists opposed the legislation as a retrograde step on the path to independence.¹⁹⁸ Central to RPR and UDF criticisms of the statute bill were its regional divisions. The Opposition complained to the Constitutional Council that these divisions were undemocratic, giving New Caledonia's rural and predominantly Melanesian inhabitants disproportionate representation in the Territorial Congress. The complaint was upheld on 8 August, when the Constitutional Council announced that the statute bill was contrary to the Constitution on these grounds. The decision forced a redistribution of seats to the advantage of the South. Whereas originally the bill had proposed seven seats for the Loyalty Islands, nine for the North Region, nine for the Centre and 18 for the South, the new distribution gave three more seats to the South.¹⁹⁹ This concession failed to satisfy RPR leaders, who once

**Table 8. New Caledonian Regional Elections
1985**

Territorial Results: 29 September

Registered voters	89,775
Votes cast	71,995
Turnout	80.19%
Valid votes	71,454

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPCR	37,147	51.60	25
FLNKS	20,545	28.54	16
FN	5,274	7.33	3
LKS	4,597	6.39	1
RPC	1,058	1.47	1
Others	2,833	3.94	0

Regional Results

	North	Centre	South	Loyalty
Registered voters	15,026	14,260	48,683	11,806
Votes cast	12,472	12,063	37,972	9,488
Turnout	83.0%	84.59%	78.0%	80.37%
Valid votes	12,386	11,965	37,685	9,418

Party				
RPCR	2,889	5,004	26,612	2,642
FLNKS	7,383	5,433	2,820	4,909
FN	-	12	5,262	-
LKS	709	789	1,232	1,867
RPC	1,058	-	-	-
Others	347	727	1,759	-

Source: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 octobre 1985.

Table 9. Tourism in New Caledonia 1980-1990

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Total Visitors	78,040	78,892	84,563	88,209	90,655	47,804	57,396	60,747	61,079	79,640	84,753

Sources: ITSEE: *TEC 1985* p.191, *TEC 1988* p.197.

again lodged a plea with the Constitutional Council, although this complaint was rejected on 23 August, and the statute was promulgated.

The rejection of the new statute on 31 May by the Territorial Assembly was as predictable as the government decision to ignore its objections. In a remarkable about-face, at its Hienghène congress on 26 May the FLNKS announced approval of the statute for the very reasons that the RPCR opposed it. In spite of its rejection of the statute's "logique néo-coloniale",²⁰⁰ the FLNKS decided to participate in the September elections, thus ending its boycott of territorial institutions. Although its timetable for independence had once again been lengthened by acceptance of the new schedule for the referendum, the FLNKS responded to the greater regional powers under the new statute. The reduction of Nouméa's control over the Melanesian-dominated hinterland of New Caledonia would, they argued, permit lasting local autonomy and serve as a strong basis for independence.²⁰¹

This pragmatic cooperation with French institutional reform called into question the commitment made by the FLNKS in its charter to attain full sovereignty for Kanaks through a national liberation struggle against French rule. Participation in the new reforms indicated that the FLNKS was not invariably entrenched in its opposition to French institutions.²⁰² At the Hienghène congress, Tjibaou and the UC successfully urged other FLNKS members to employ the finance and administrative powers offered by the new statute as a mechanism which would enhance Kanak rural autonomy as a preliminary step toward independence. The acceptance of French state funding for regional administration underlined the slender financial means of the Kanak provisional government, and the inadequacy of its plans to institute independence unilaterally. The prospects of setting up the economic and administrative infrastructures necessary to achieve viable independence in 1987 were slim, even disregarding the opposition of the local loyalist majority. It is doubtful whether the provisional government of Kanaky was capable of being more than a means of pressuring Paris.

The new FLNKS policy of pragmatic cooperation with government reforms allowed it to gain 16 of the 46 seats in the regional elections on 29 September 1985. (Table 8) All but one of these were outside the South. The Front also gained majority control in all except the South Region, to the dismay of its opponents in Nouméa and Paris, who reiterated accusations of Socialist gerrymandering under the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute in spite of the ruling of the Constitutional Council.²⁰³ None the less, the RPCR confirmed its overall majority, with 25 seats and 51.60% of the territorial vote. Other parties standing which opposed independence, the FN and Rassemblement Progrès et Coutume,²⁰⁴ gained a combined 8.8% of the vote. This gave anti-independence parties over 60% of the vote. On the basis of these figures, the chance of the FLNKS obtaining majority support in the forthcoming referendum of 1987 looked slight even if all its voters in September 1985 would vote for independence. Assuming that the turnout in the referendum would be the same as that of the regionals, and that all 5,500 of the voters who would be excluded from the referendum would have desired New Caledonia to remain French, their disqualification would only have lowered the anti-independence vote by an outside theoretical maximum of 7.64%. The regional elections reconfirmed that an absolute majority of New Caledonian voters were opposed to the exponents of Kanak nationalism.

The implementation of Socialist reform in New Caledonia was cut short by the change of Government in Paris in March 1986. As with the Dijoud Plan, it is not possible to judge the full consequences of the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute; it did not survive long enough to make a lasting impact on the territory. The little that can be said for it is that its concessions led the FLNKS to participate in New Caledonia's administration, despite the contradictory maintenance of the provisional government of Kanaky as a reminder that the

coalition might yet abandon its pragmatism. The FLNKS had not surrendered its nationalist agenda, however it was not in a strong position to promote it. It was prepared to wait for independence longer than either it or the FI had been in previous years. Kanak nationalist hyperbole on the liberation struggle had stumbled on the limited resources of the FLNKS to wage such a campaign, and on the determination of representatives of the French State to defend law and order.

A gap remained between the unrealistic Melanesian nationalist expectations of the FLNKS, and what Paris was prepared to concede to meet the Front's agenda. The eligibility conditions for the self-determination referendum, a major point of dissension with Paris, had not been finalised. The Chirac Government inherited this problem, and the potential for confrontation it entailed, from the Socialists.

Although the RPCR erroneously continued to insist, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that there was no ethnic problem in New Caledonia,²⁰⁵ its concern for economic depression in New Caledonia was justified. Territorial economic dependence had not been diminished under Socialist administration, rather it had continued its erratic course since the late 1970s.²⁰⁶ The troubles of 1984 and 1985 caused a marked drop in tourist arrivals, disturbing the steady growth that tourism had experienced since 1980. (Table 9) Australian and New Zealand tourists were discouraged by reports of violence, although Japanese arrivals did not greatly diminish due to lack of coverage of local political events in the Japanese media.²⁰⁷ Despite property damage,²⁰⁸ rural confrontation in 1984 and 1985 did not significantly disrupt agricultural production. Its stagnation had preceded the troubles.²⁰⁹ From 1981 to 1986, Socialist Governments were distracted from development issues by the debate over self-determination to the point that, by 1985, Pisani was preoccupied with the former to the effective exclusion of the latter.

The Pons Interlude

The electoral majority attained by the RPR/UDF alliance at both national level and in New Caledonia in the legislative elections of March 1986 (Tables 10, 11) marked the beginning of a new, albeit brief, political era for New Caledonia. With the RPR dominating the new liberal-conservative coalition Government in Paris, to the relief of the RPCR New Caledonia was to be subject to policy priorities more conservative than those of Dijoud or his Socialist successors. As the inheritors of Gaullism, RPR leaders tended to present themselves as the purest exponents of French Republicanism, the guardians of the institutions and values established by the General. In 1986 there was no indication that this assumption had weakened. Pons, as the new Minister to the DOM-TOM, announced renewed government policy emphasis on DOM-TOM policy.²¹⁰

The parliamentarians of the new majority were viscerally opposed to New Caledonian independence. For example Chirac held that secession would diminish the territory of the Republic, and would lessen the global grandeur of France.²¹¹ It was speculated that New Caledonian independence might also encourage support for Maohi nationalists in French Polynesia.²¹² The Chirac Government nevertheless agreed with the Socialist Governments from 1981 to 1986 in insisting that if independence must occur, it could only legitimately take place if desired by a majority of the territorial electorate, and if accomplished within the confines of constitutional law. The RPR's insistence in the 1980s on observing constitutional requirements was more scrupulously legalistic than de Gaulle's policy conduct had been in the 1960s. With Algeria, the magnitude of opposition to French rule had been such that the Constitution, which did not allow secession of Departments from the Republic, had to be disregarded. No such exception would be made by the RPR for those among the 65,000 or so

**Table 10. French Legislative Elections, 1986.
National Results**

16, 23 March

Registered voters	37,562,173
Votes cast	29,299,852
Turnout	78.0%
Valid votes	28,024,168

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
UDF-RPR ¹	11,482,003	39.18	286
PS	8,857,752	30.23	212
PC	2,739,925	9.35	35
FN	2,703,442	9.23	35
Others	2,241,046	7.65	8

Source: *L'année politique, économique et sociale en France 1986* p.187.

¹ The RPR and the UDF formed a coalition for the election. In some electorates, separate candidates stood for the RPR and the UDF. In others the two parties presented candidates on a joint list.

**Table 11. French Legislative Elections, 1986.
New Caledonian Results**

16 March

Registered voters	90,578
Votes cast	45,637
Turnout	50.38%
Valid votes	44,817

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPCR	39,677	86.94	2
Others	5,140	11.26	0

Maurice Nenou and Jacques Lafleur were elected.

Sources: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 17 mars 1986; *Le Monde* 19 mars 1986.

Melanesians in New Caledonia who called themselves Kanaks. In December 1984 Jacques Toubon, the Secretary-General of the RPR, had declared to the National Assembly that any self-determination referendum would have to respect the following legal considerations:

La première condition, c'est que le vote soit égal pour tous. Il n'existe plus en France de suffrage censitaire, de suffrage ethnique ou de suffrage racial. La deuxième condition, c'est que le vote soit libre, [...] que l'ordre soit maintenu pour que le vote soit régulier et que tous ceux qui veulent aller voter puissent y aller. Troisième condition: que le suffrage universel soit respecté, c'est-à-dire que si, en l'occurrence, les Calédoniens disent: nous sommes pour l'indépendance, qu'ils la prennent, et, s'ils disent qu'ils sont contre l'indépendance, qu'on ne la leur impose pas alors que la majorité d'entre eux ne l'aura pas voulue.²¹³

As has been noted, the FLNKS was not likely to gain Kanak independence through a referendum which contained no electoral advantage to Melanesians. The RPR therefore had no hesitation in promising to adhere to the Fabius Government's timetable for a self-determination vote even before it entered government.²¹⁴

In spite of much vehement declamation by RPR Deputies over the reforms of the Fabius Government, and the advancement of the proposition that the Socialists had been steering New Caledonia toward independence, the position of Gaullists on self-determination for New Caledonia was essentially the same as that of the Socialists. The observation by Toubon that if New Caledonians wanted independence they could take it by constitutionally recognised means had been expressed in almost the same terms by Mitterrand when discussing the TOM in *Ici et maintenant*: "s'ils veulent l'indépendance [...] qu'ils la prennent".²¹⁵ As was pointed out in chapter 1, the UDF shared this position with the PS and the RPR.

The primacy of "le peuple kanak" was at best a marginal concept for the RPR. In 1981 Claude Labbé, President of the RPR group in the National Assembly, stated his party's wish for "une très grande ouverture aux exigences légitimes des différentes communautés" in New Caledonia.²¹⁶ In practice this openness did not extend to recognising Kanak claims to privileged status, either through socio-economic policy aimed to improve the material situation of Melanesians, or through a restricted self-determination vote guaranteed to result in independence. French democratic principles took precedence over Kanak particularism. While Labbé admitted the existence of different ethnic groups in New Caledonia, for Pons its inhabitants were above all French. In one telling outburst during a National Assembly debate in 1985, Pons interjected when a speaker referred to the "communautés différentes" in the territory, riposting "Il n'y a pas de communautés différentes! Il y en a une seule!"²¹⁷ This was not an isolated remark. In a Senate debate in 1986, Pons was to go a step further with another interjection in the same vein. Rolande Perlican, a PC Senator, accused Pons of turning his back on "[les] intérêts du peuple kanak". Pons exclaimed "Il n'y a pas de peuple kanak!"²¹⁸ He asserted that the concept of a Kanak people could not be considered a valid one when not all of New Caledonia's Melanesians aspired to Kanak independence.²¹⁹ With his formally democratic agenda of equality under law for all, Pons absolved himself on the levels of statutory, institutional and voting reform from recognising either Kanak identity or the historical disadvantages of New Caledonia's Melanesians, although his social reforms held the same advantages for Kanaks as for the rest of the territorial population. His position differed radically from that of the PC which, during cohabitation, continued calling for decolonisation and recognition of the Kanak people.²²⁰ To an even lesser extent than during the time the Socialists were in government, PC parliamentarians were insufficiently numerous to bring about such policy.

For Pons, and for other RPR conservatives, the concept of a single Kanak identity had no validity. They rested their case on the tribal and linguistic divisions existing among the indigenous inhabitants of New Caledonia, and on the fact that no Melanesian nation had existed prior to French annexation of the islands. They pointed out that no historical basis existed for indigenous claims to sovereignty and that concepts such as 'le peuple Kanak' and 'Kanak' were recent inventions, dating from the 1970s. Although these were valid points, this outlook led the Chirac Government to underestimate the depth of nationalist sentiment amongst those New Caledonian Melanesians who referred to themselves as Kanaks. Whether or not the Chirac Government subscribed to the FLNKS view of Kanak identity, the existence of an overall majority of the Melanesian population in New Caledonia which called itself Kanak could not be discounted, even though this was the tendency of the Government due to an aversion to its claims of legitimacy.

The most outstanding expression of Kanak identity, the provisional government of Kanaky, represented an affront to the Chirac Government's interpretation of Republican legitimacy. In December 1984 Messmer had described the provisional government as "un gouvernement illégal".²²¹ It was asserted by the Gaullists as well as by Giscardians that in establishing its provisional government and in actively boycotting the territorial elections in November 1984, the FLNKS had placed itself beyond the protection of the law and should be sanctioned. The arrival of the president of the provisional government of Kanaky in the public gallery of the National Assembly on 23 January 1985 provoked a hue and cry, not only from RPR Deputies, but also from their UDF colleagues. Labbé protested at "la présence intolérable d'un homme qui s'est volontairement situé en dehors de la République". He demanded that Tjibaou be ejected for his assumed "responsabilité d'un certain nombre d'exactions commises sur le territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie".²²² Another Deputy, Jean-Claude Gaudin, described Tjibaou as "le président d'un gouvernement provisoire en rébellion ouverte contre la France".²²³

This was indeed the portrayal that the FLNKS provisional government had presented itself since its foundation, although as a generalised Kanak rebellion had not occurred by January 1985, there was reason to doubt the accuracy of this characterisation, unless one assumed, as Gaudin did, that the very existence of a self-proclaimed provisional government stood as a rebellious act. Although from November to December 1985 107 roadblocks had been erected both by French loyalists and Kanaks, 96 buildings and cars had been torched, 41 properties had been vandalised or looted, 15 bombings had occurred and 86 firearms had been confiscated,²²⁴ it is difficult to characterise this low intensity conflict as constituting a civil war or a rebellion. The efforts of the FLNKS provisional government to resist French rule appeared half-hearted compared to the effects of the Melanesian tribal rebellions of 1878 and of 1917 when, respectively, approximately 1,400 and 220 people had been killed.²²⁵ During the 1980s more than 50 people were killed as a result of sporadic political violence, mainly from 1984 to 1988, although Kanak activism did not lead to civil war for the reason that the FLNKS was not equipped to wage one. Rather FLNKS militant activism involved rowdy, violent pressure tactics, alternating with pragmatic cooperation with the French State.

For all their hostility to the FLNKS in opposition, it should be noted that RPR leaders never went so far as to outlaw the Front when in government. At the height of the FLNKS active boycott of the presidential and territorial elections in April 1988 Pons announced that he had asked Chirac to dissolve the Front, but the Prime Minister did not go beyond considering the proposal.²²⁶ There was perhaps a realisation among them that such an undertaking would serve only to aggravate discord in the territory. However much the RPR scorned the FLNKS, opposed its nationalist philosophy, and decried its periodically

violent activism, the Chirac Government did not deny the party its legal existence.

Concern for law and order formed another determining feature of RPR policy in New Caledonia. Gaullists maintained that blame for the surge in violence there from November 1984 ultimately rested with the Socialist Governments. Chirac declared that these administrations had failed to preserve the peace.²²⁷ Socialist Ministers were alleged to have encouraged divisions in New Caledonia by legislating discriminately in favour of Kanaks. Labbé declared in November 1984: "Le gouvernement porte aujourd'hui la totale responsabilité des affrontements entre Calédoniens". He accused Fabius and his colleagues of having taken "la voie de racisme".²²⁸ For this reason, the RPR called for Lemoine's resignation,²²⁹ and demanded the return of Pisani to Paris when violence continued into 1985. For the RPR the spread of violence in New Caledonia represented one of the most visible signs of deficiencies in Socialist Government policy conduct there. Once in government, the Gaullists found themselves the subject of similar allegations from the Socialists and Communists. To its chagrin, the Chirac Government too experienced law and order problems during its time in office, particularly when the FLNKS mobilised for its active boycott of the territorial and French presidential elections from April 1988. The increased police and military presence from 1986 to 1988, particularly around Melanesian tribes, had not served to dissuade violent Kanak activism.²³⁰

Pons rejected Mitterrand's thesis that there existed in New Caledonia a colonial situation which needed to be redressed. Pons conceded that some injustices existed, but claimed that these were mainly the result of Melanesian tribal values, which hindered local social and agricultural development.²³¹ For Pons, colonialism was a word from another age with no validity in the French Republic in the last quarter of the twentieth century. It was claimed that New Caledonia had become an integral part of that Republic, just as Brittany, Savoy and Corsica had, although unlike them New Caledonia was a TOM which was constitutionally permitted to accede to independence. RPR stalwarts tended to make reference to colonialism in New Caledonia only when projecting scenarios of foreign expansion there should France withdraw.²³²

RPR criticism of the limitations of Socialist decentralisation has already been noted. Socialist measures were characterised either as half-hearted, imbalanced, or as the opposite of decentralisation. The Gaullists claimed they had their own concept of decentralisation, by means of which they attempted to transform New Caledonia while in government. A concise description of what form decentralisation should take in the TOM was offered in 1984 by Toubon during debate of French Polynesia's new statute by the National Assembly:

[...] chaque territoire doit disposer d'un statut spécifique, répondant aux aspirations démocratiquement exprimées par la majorité de la population ainsi qu'à ses caractéristiques géographiques, humaines et économiques. Naturellement, ces divers statuts doivent avoir des caractéristiques communes qui sont nécessaires pour l'exercice de la démocratie. Il faut qu'ils soient fondés sur la représentativité électorale et s'ils doivent conférer de larges pouvoirs à l'exécutif local, ils doivent maintenir à l'Etat les compétences nécessaires à sa souveraineté, à l'intégrité du territoire national, à la défense, aux relations internationales.

Nous sommes donc bien favorables à la décentralisation comme partout en France, à l'autonomie interne quand un territoire en a la capacité et la volonté, mais nous sommes contre l'indépendance.²³³

This was decentralisation with a Republican streak, internal autonomy designed to consolidate ties with Paris rather than weaken them. In New Caledonia, Pisani had conceived regionalisation as a preliminary step to possible independence. For the RPR, the delegation of administrative powers to the

territory should not go so far as to allow this. In New Caledonia in 1986, founding the administrative framework on a democratic basis by reinforcing the powers of the territorial executive would shore up the influence of the RPCR, the formation with the most representatives in the Territorial Congress. Under the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, the institution of greater autonomy at regional level and the restoration of the High Commissioner as the Territorial President had reduced the influence of the RPCR, as had the unrepresentative distribution of seats in the Territorial Congress (until overruled by the Constitutional Council), and the new regional boundaries.

In implementing the RPR vision for New Caledonia, Pons had certain advantages over the Socialists. He had paid numerous visits to the territory prior to becoming Minister and had cultivated close relations with the conservative electorate and its leaders.²³⁴ His party had abiding links with the RPCR and enjoyed majority support in the Territorial Congress. But to his detriment, Pons did not have the confidence of Melanesian nationalists. His denial of Kanak identity, his opposition to Kanak self-determination, his affirmation of the backwardness of Melanesian tribal culture, and his insistence on the importance of French nationalism above Kanak nationalism did not endear him to the FLNKS. This attitudinal gulf between Pons and the FLNKS did not presage well for his appeal for openness and dialogue in discussions between Paris and Nouméa concerning New Caledonia.²³⁵ Pons was to have a difficult time convincing Melanesian nationalists of his sincerity. In his first weeks as Minister, the opportunity for dialogue with the FLNKS remained open, but avenues of debate turned into dead-ends because of the mutually exclusive theses of Pons and the FLNKS regarding political prospects in New Caledonia. Pons met an FLNKS delegation in Paris on 8 May 1986, although this meeting produced no more than declarations of their respective positions.²³⁶ Following the start of government reforms in April 1986, the FLNKS announced it would organise passive demonstrations.²³⁷ To protest at the refusal of the Chirac Government to limit the franchise to Melanesians in the self-determination referendum, the FLNKS announced in August 1986 at its congress at Wé preparations for a campaign of civil disobedience and an eventual withdrawal from territorial institutions.²³⁸ By December 1986, the Front had cut off dialogue with Pons, and demanded in vain of Chirac the dismissal of his Minister to the DOM-TOM.²³⁹

Immediate differences hinged on conditions for the referendum. As they were unrealistic demands, Tjibaou abandoned past FLNKS claims to an exclusively Kanak franchise for the referendum, and conceded that eligible voters, Kanak or not, with a least one parent born in New Caledonia might vote. Pons made the same response to this proposal as the Mauroy and Fabius Governments had when called on to restrict voting eligibility to the advantage of Kanaks. He rejected the proposal as discriminatory and undemocratic.²⁴⁰ Bringing policy conduct in line with the criteria used for the self-determination vote in Djibouti a decade before, Chirac announced at the end of January 1987 that voter eligibility would be restricted to those who had resided in New Caledonia for three years or more at the time of the plebiscite.²⁴¹ This was a major concession for the RPR, in that it also brought the referendum conditions in line with those proposed by Fabius in 1985. Previously, the RPR had only supported the exclusion of otherwise eligible voters who had lived in the territory less than three months.²⁴² This concession was not capable of satisfying the FLNKS. Perhaps hoping for further concessions, it responded by stepping up its opposition to the Government. The provisional government of Kanaky, of which little had been heard since 1985, was reactivated in February 1987.²⁴³ By May, the FLNKS was preparing a non-violent boycott of the self-determination referendum,²⁴⁴ which had been scheduled for September.

Part of the FLNKS lobbying against the Chirac Government entailed seeking presidential intervention. At the end of January 1987, Tjibaou called on

**Table 12: New Caledonian Self-Determination
Referendum
1987**

Territorial Results: 13 September

Registered voters	85,200
Votes cast	49,453
Turnout	58.04%
For France	48,611
For independence	842

Regional Results

	North	Centre	South	Loyalty
Registered voters	14,728	13,864	44,648	11,960
Votes cast	4,720	6,116	35,671	2,946
Turnout	32.05%	44.11%	79.89%	24.63%
For France	4,468	5,936	35,291	2,916
For independence	252	180	380	30

Source: *Le Monde* 15 septembre 1987.

Mitterrand to arbitrate the Front's dispute with the Government.²⁴⁵ Mitterrand professed to be alarmed by developments concerning New Caledonia. He described the disregard in which the Chirac Government held the FLNKS as reactionary, but he hesitated to interfere in government legislation for New Caledonia. Under cohabitation, the informal arrangement arrived at between Mitterrand and his political opponents in government was that the President retained executive control over defence and foreign policy, leaving executive and legislative decisions about other portfolios to Chirac. This division of responsibilities was necessary to reduce disagreements between the President and the Government which otherwise would have disrupted national administration. Consequently Mitterrand did not determine DOM-TOM policy as it was a component of internal affairs. Mitterrand had the capacity for recourse to the Constitutional Council if legislation could be deemed unconstitutional: he contemplated using this option in May 1986,²⁴⁶ and concluded that he had no justifiable grounds for doing so. Limited in his capacity to directly influence government legislation concerning New Caledonia, Mitterrand attempted instead to influence public opinion by declaring his objections to government policy conduct.²⁴⁷ But with regard to the referendum, the Chirac Government was fulfilling policy initiatives which Mitterrand's colleagues had set in motion. The referendum was to be held within the time limit that the Socialists had scheduled, and the electoral eligibility criteria applied were those envisaged under Fabius.

Mitterrand publicly opposed what he portrayed as the heavy-handed approach to law and order in New Caledonia under Chirac. An example of this was provided by the events which followed the announcement by Pons on 6 August 1987 of a ban on political marches.²⁴⁸ Pons reasoned that the ban would lessen the potential for confrontation between Kanaks and French loyalists, who had organised simultaneous demonstrations in Nouméa. The FLNKS perceived the ban as an attempt to muzzle its protests against the referendum, and organised demonstrations in spite of it. On 22 August, two FLNKS marches, one in Thio and one in Nouméa, were dispersed by gendarmes using tear gas and batons.²⁴⁹ Footage of the dispersal of the march in Nouméa, with close-up shots of unarmed demonstrators being bludgeoned, made its way on to international television screens after an Australian TV crew filmed it. This incident, somewhat embarrassing to the Government, led PS leaders to issue statements opposing police brutality and declaring the pointlessness of using violent means to disperse unarmed, peaceful albeit illegal demonstrators.²⁵⁰ After a meeting of the Council of Ministers on 26 August, Mitterrand referred to the brutality involved in the dispersal, and added his objections to such violence.²⁵¹ Presidential opposition to this incident came in spite of the fact that he and the Fabius Government had displayed a similar preoccupation with law and order in 1984 and 1985. Mitterrand could well vilify the clubbing of unarmed Kanak demonstrators in 1987, although this example of law enforcement was arguably less punitive than the deaths of Machoro and Nonnaro in January 1985. Comparisons might also be drawn between the ban by Pons of public demonstrations and Pisani's ban on public assemblies under the state of emergency he had declared in 1985. Deeming one of these decisions more authoritarian than the other would depend largely on the party sympathies of the person making the judgement. Mitterrand's stance was thus morally ambiguous; he freely criticised the implementation under Chirac of measures to halt civil disorder, but these measures were similar to those implemented with his tacit assent under Fabius.

The territorial self-determination referendum on 13 September 1987 confirmed what had been expected: an absolute majority of New Caledonian voters preferred to remain French. (Table 12) Of the 58.04% of eligible voters who participated in the referendum, 98.3% desired to remain in the Republic, while 1.7% were for independence. The territorial abstention rate was 41.96%, and was much higher in the North, Centre and Loyalty regions, where Kanaks

enjoyed an electoral majority. The LKS, with its support base in the Loyalty Islands, backed the boycott in a display of solidarity with the FLNKS and of opposition to the Chirac Government. In the absence of violent protest by the FLNKS, the LKS was prepared to join a boycott against a referendum which did not meet Kanak demands. The LKS moreover had less confidence in the Chirac Government than it had in the Socialists to formulate policy responses satisfactory to Kanaks. The number of abstentions in these three regions provided evidence of the level of general Kanak support for the FLNKS boycott, although not necessarily with FLNKS positions, and contrasted with the high participation rate in the South.

These results were hailed by the RPCR, RPR and the FN as a triumph for the Republic, a strong sign of New Caledonian determination to remain French.²⁵² After the referendum Chirac and Pons called for the FLNKS to reconsider its boycott and to take part in negotiations for the new territorial statute.²⁵³ Tjibaou's reaction came in a statement on 14 September declaring that the FLNKS had not abandoned its goal of independence and retained its insistence on a self-determination referendum with voter eligibility conditions predetermined to the advantage of a majority vote for Kanak independence.²⁵⁴ This declaration was not regarded by the Chirac Government as being of any great importance. Pons considered the referendum to be an affirmation of support for his ongoing reforms. As with Lemoine, this confidence was misplaced. Although, unlike Lemoine, Pons had local majority support for the bulk of his reform proposals, he had not inspired a territorial consensus backing his reforms. This fact was not regarded with any trepidation, although it should have been considering the deaths and property destruction which had ensued under Lemoine when the FLNKS had demonstrated the extent of its discontent. Pons did not show great public concern for the reaction of the FLNKS. As he had pointed out in February 1987, he did not regard the FLNKS as an "interlocuteur obligé".²⁵⁵

A cautious Minister might have hesitated to overturn the existing territorial statute, particularly as it had not hindered the exercise of French sovereignty over New Caledonia, or undermined the democratic majority of the RPCR. If aspects of the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute were deemed faulty for whatever reason, they could be adjusted by legislation or by administrative practice designed to override specific parts of the statute, as Pons had already done during 1986, rather than by abandoning the whole. But these measures were considered inadequate and were too easily undone in the event of a change of government. Mindful of the approaching presidential elections in April 1988, which would probably result in a PS victory due to RPR differences with the UDF, after the self-determination referendum Pons prepared a new territorial statute. The statute turned out to be a fruitless undertaking due to the re-election of Mitterrand in May 1988 and the consequent installation of a new Socialist Government led by Prime Minister Michel Rocard.

Pons had already committed himself to a major redefinition of the administrative structure of New Caledonia in 1986. Rejecting Socialist Government reforms,²⁵⁶ Pons outlined the need for an economic revival of the territory after the damage done in 1984 and 1985, and declared that another reorganisation of territorial institutions would be necessary.²⁵⁷ The initial step toward the fulfilment of this reform schedule was the promulgation in July 1986 of what came to be called the Pons Law.²⁵⁸

Article 2 of the law established special aid and development funding for New Caledonia. This measure responded to long-standing RPCR economic policy. Pons offered compensation to New Caledonians for property destruction suffered from late 1984.²⁵⁹ Compensation allowed for 30% supplementary funding to individuals wishing to re-establish themselves outside Nouméa, aid intended to encourage loyalists to re-establish themselves in the rural hinterland.²⁶⁰ Pons stimulated the economy with development subsidies to local

government and industry.²⁶¹ In 1986 250MFF of funds²⁶² were allocated to be dispensed by the High Commissioner under article 3 of the law. This spending formed an interim measure designed to fill the gap before the implementation of a new statute and the presumed more efficient administration it would install. With the aid of this funding, and coincidentally of rising nickel prices on the international market,²⁶³ New Caledonia experienced an increase in the value of its exports from 1986 to 1988. (Table 6) In spite of this expanded income, solutions to fundamental problems such as the territory's lack of rural development, its continued dependence on nickel exports, and the preponderance of tertiary sector employment, were not found. The Chirac Government found itself in the same situation as the Socialist Governments before it, too preoccupied with debate over self-determination and rewriting the territorial statute to undertake fundamental economic restructuring.

The Government was reluctant to dispense this additional development funding to the FLNKS-controlled regions and preferred to dispense it in the South or directly to communes.²⁶⁴ The three FLNKS-administered regions found themselves marginalised under Pons, who characterised them to be administratively incompetent, prone to overspending, and incapable of fulfilling the multiple responsibilities ceded under Fabius.²⁶⁵ The three FLNKS Regional Presidents rejected this characterisation. They responded that it was unreasonable to expect the regions to have fulfilled their potential in a matter of months after their creation, and pointed out what they had achieved since 1985.²⁶⁶ Allocation of regional funding assumed great importance to these three regions, as regional development formed the basis on which Kanak autonomy was to be constructed. In 1986 expenditure reductions were forced on the Centre and Loyalty Islands after the High Commissioner used his powers, as defined by the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, to annul their 1987 draft budgets. Pons dismissed the two regions' budget proposals as having projected expenditures beyond their means, declaring that his decision was financially and not politically motivated.²⁶⁷ This revision of regional funding was regarded by the FLNKS as a government attack on its credibility and as an attempt to erode its power. The decision was probably both politically and financially motivated. Its effect was to aggravate differences between the FLNKS and the Government.

Articles 29 to 38 of the Pons Law eroded another key aspect of the establishment of Kanak identity: the reclamation of ancestral lands. A new land agency, the ADRAF, was established to replace the Land Office. The ADRAF abandoned the recognition under the Land Office of the priority of Melanesian tribal land claims. Existing provision for the compulsory purchase of land, which had been introduced under Dijoud, was removed.²⁶⁸ Pons declared that tribal land claims had largely been satisfied, and that the major hurdle to land reform now lay in the need to convince tribal leaders to abandon traditional forms of land tenure for modern, economically viable, owner-operated farms.²⁶⁹ Land distribution by the ADRAF would be multi-racial. While the orientation of the ADRAF was claimed by the Chirac Government to be more egalitarian than the Land Office, its shortcomings later became public knowledge. In September 1989 a report by an Inspector-General of Finances confirmed earlier allegations both by the FLNKS²⁷⁰ and by the extreme right in New Caledonia²⁷¹ that the RPCR members and associates running the ADRAF were using their powers in a less than impartial manner. Collective Melanesian land claims were marginalised under the ADRAF from the time of its establishment till the departure of the Chirac Government in May 1988. Of 717 Melanesian land claims in that period, only 17 were approved, and these were mainly awarded to individuals.²⁷² To the detriment of tribal claims and ethnic harmony, RPCR leaders and supporters, from Lafleur down, found themselves benefiting from personally profitable land sales made by the ADRAF.²⁷³ It was not until after the appointment of the Rocard Government in June 1988 that any

attempt was made to set the ADRAF in order. The need to do so did not reflect well on the Chirac Government, or on the RPCR.

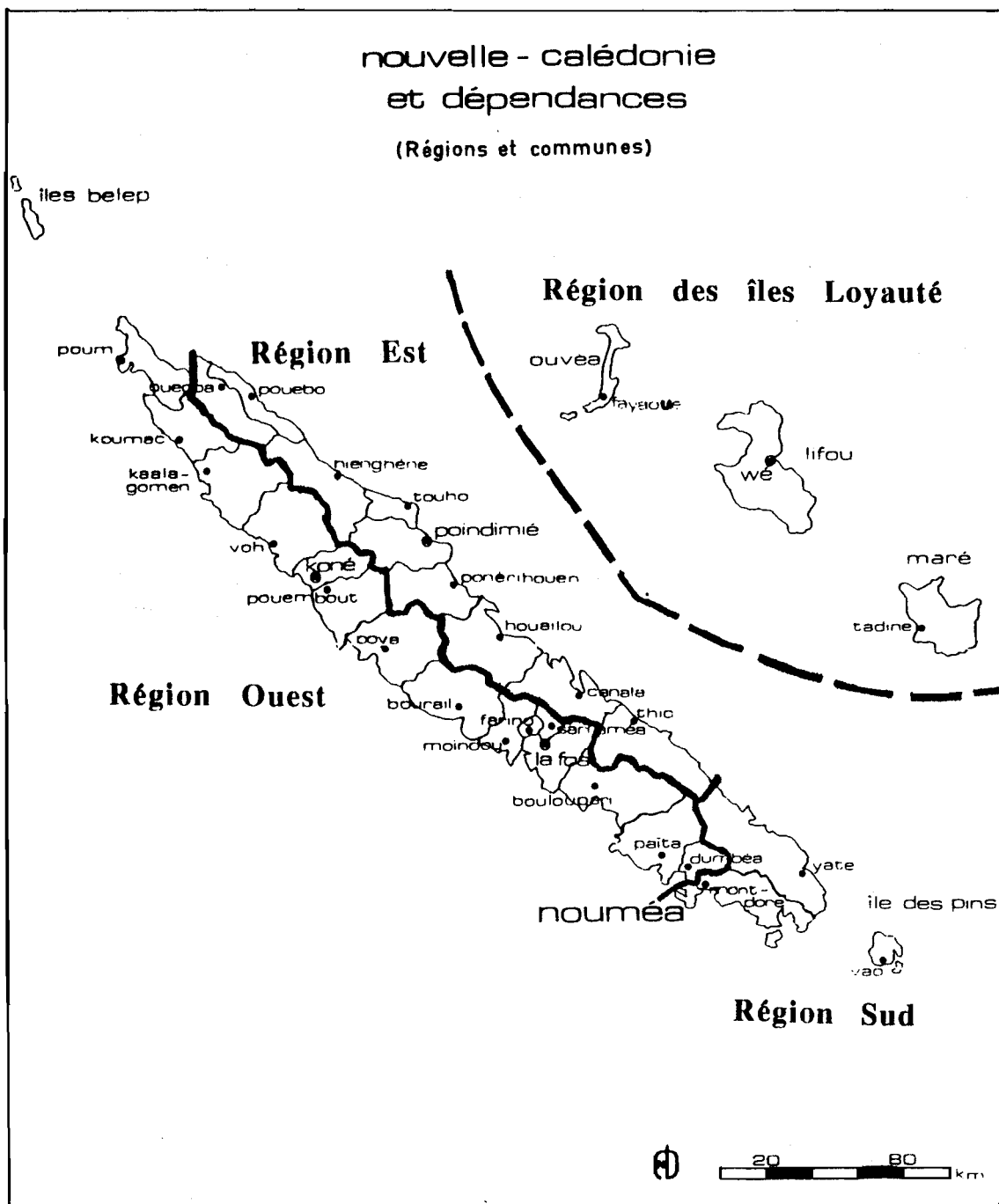
The Regional Autonomy Statute, promulgated late in the day for the Chirac Government on 22 January 1988,²⁷⁴ furthered the government dismantling of Melanesian specificity as recognised under the Socialists by revising the organisation of territorial cultural institutions. An ethnically pluralistic Caledonian Culture Office was set up, "chargé de la conservation et de la promotion de l'ensemble des cultures représentées dans le territoire".²⁷⁵ The specific promotion of Kanak culture was avoided in preference to a multicultural emphasis harking back to Dijoud. The stance of the Chirac Government with regard to Melanesian custom authority as expressed in the Regional Autonomy Statute was less reformist. Article 4 retained tribal representation through a Custom Assembly. Not that the role of the Custom Assembly was innovative. Its function as a territorial advisory body, outlined under article 9 of the Regional Autonomy Statute, followed past legislation.

Pons considered his Regional Autonomy Statute to be the culmination of his reforms for New Caledonia. Owing to the impending presidential elections, the legislation was contemplated with general scepticism in the National Assembly. It was felt that were Mitterrand elected for a second septennate overseeing another Socialist Government, the Regional Autonomy Statute would be rendered a dead letter. The PS, the PC, and even the UDF, pointed this out.²⁷⁶ This projection was later vindicated and the Regional Autonomy Statute, like other statutes which had preceded it in the 1980s, was to be short-lived. The FN rejected the legislation formulated by Pons for its espousal of regional autonomy, claiming that the Chirac Government was weakening territorial bonds with France and offering aid and finance to the enemy of the Republic, the FLNKS.²⁷⁷ The FN, hostile to Kanak nationalism as well as to RPCR electoral dominance in the territory, would have preferred the stripping of regional powers from both the FLNKS and the RPCR as part of a marked recentralisation in New Caledonia.²⁷⁸ This FN preference, like the unconditional decolonisation still being promoted by the PC, was to remain in the realm of fantasy for want of wider national electoral support for such options.

The Regional Autonomy Statute did not in fact decentralise to the extent that the FN claimed. Neither did it stifle regional administration to the extent that the Socialists claimed. On 19 January 1988, the Constitutional Council rejected a complaint from Socialist Deputies that the statute bill accorded too many powers to a proposed territorial Executive Council.²⁷⁹ It was asserted that the Executive Council would be dominated by the RPCR. However, provision was made to include representatives from regions where Kanak parties were electorally dominant, and each remaining member was appointed from the Territorial Congress on a proportional basis. The Executive Council consisted of ten representatives including the four Regional Presidents, and five Territorial Councillors appointed from the Territorial Congress. The High Commissioner experienced a reduction in his status in that he would no longer be the president of the territory, and would only exercise a casting vote in the Executive Council. A Territorial President elected by the Territorial Congress led the Executive Council, and assumed formal control over territorial affairs. Had they wished to participate in the elections scheduled for April 1988 under the new statutory conditions, minority Kanak parties would have enjoyed the power of veto over an RPCR majority in the Executive Council. Article 40 required the Council to have a two-thirds majority before major items such as the territorial budget could be passed.

Otherwise, the Regional Autonomy Statute provided only a symbolic reorganisation. Under article 6 the High Commissioner retained the bulk of his powers as representative of the State in New Caledonia. As had been the case under the Lemoine Statute, he oversaw foreign relations, immigration, external communications, finance, defence, law and order, civil law to the exclusion of

**Map 4. Regions Established by the
Regional Autonomy Statute
1988**



Sources: DTSEE: *Schéma de l'économie néo-calédonienne* 1985; *Presence* nos.17-18 1990 p.16.

custom law and commercial law, justice and the organisation of the judiciary, management of state bodies, communal administration, and retained control over natural resources.²⁸⁰ Like the terms of the Lemoine Statute, some provision was left open to the territory to organise higher research facilities, and partial control was given over secondary education.²⁸¹ The new territorial administration involved institutional rearrangements, although the basic distribution of powers between it and the State had not greatly changed. As had been the case under the Socialists, the Chirac Government was not prepared to decentralise to the extent of seriously diminishing state authority over New Caledonia. Ironically, the Chirac Government ended up promulgating a statute which did not differ greatly from the Lemoine Statute in its distribution of state and territorial powers, in spite of RPR and UDF criticisms in 1984 that Lemoine had been promoting excessive decentralisation to assist Kanak nationalism. But in 1984 the Lemoine Statute had been an interim framework prior to a self-determination vote concerning which the precise conditions had not been finalised. With the issue of self-determination assumed to have been settled by the referendum of September 1987, the Chirac Government felt secure in according powers to territorial leaders which its members had declared risky in 1984.

Regional responsibilities were not greatly different from those accorded under the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute either. Article 8 of the Regional Autonomy Statute changed little. As they had since 1985, the regions would still control their own agricultural and maritime resources, health, cultural development, housing, public works, and professional training. Major changes included the attribution of administration over tourism, as well as the removal of control over primary education, and the implementation of land reform. This aspect of the final legislation calls into question the veracity of Pons's expressed position in 1986 that existing regional administrative powers were too extensive: in 1988 he left the regions with the bulk of their responsibilities untouched. The decision made to leave these powers largely unchanged rendered questionable Gaullist claims to have a different conception of decentralisation from the Socialists. Their New Caledonian statute failed to demonstrate this assertion.

Overall, the Regional Autonomy Statute did not involve a great break from preceding legislation. Its major innovation was a further redefinition of regional boundaries under article 3 which was intended to diminish FLNKS regional dominance. These new divisions were likely to give the FLNKS a clear electoral majority in two of the four new regions (the East and the Loyalty Islands), rather than three of the four pre-existing regions. (Maps 3 and 4) The aim was to counterbalance the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, which had given majority control of three of the four New Caledonian regions to a formation with the support of less than 30% of the territorial vote. (Table 8) Another Kanak advantage gained under the Socialists was struck down. Here, Pons legislated to the advantage of loyalist electoral interests in the same partisan fashion as the Fabius Government had changed boundaries to the benefit of the FLNKS with the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute in 1985. The Centre and North Regions disappeared, to be replaced by an East/West division of the Grande Terre. While Kanak support on the east coast of the Grande Terre would have assured the FLNKS a majority in the East Region, the West Region was destined to be dominated by loyalist parties. Territorially large non-indigenous rural centres such as Dumbéa and Bourail, which were also loyalist electoral strongholds, were to be found there. While during the regional elections of 24 April 1988, mainly Kanak abstentions in the East totalled 75.86% of eligible voters, in the West they amounted to 46.31%.²⁸² The electoral favouritism of the Chirac Government extended to organising the first elections under the new statute to coincide with the date of the first round of the presidential elections. This decision was made in response to lobbying by the RPCR, which feared a decline in its electoral support should the regional elections be held in the wake of presidential elections lost by Chirac.²⁸³

The final months of the Chirac Government involved increasing FLNKS-initiated violence which became as troublesome to Pons as it had been to Pisani.²⁸⁴ Pons had inspired considerable enmity from Kanaks with his disregard for their interests in preparing the self-determination referendum, the Pons Law and the Regional Autonomy Statute. The FLNKS was powerless to influence the course of government legislation due to the Front's marginal electoral base in French national politics. It enjoyed only minority representation in New Caledonia, and no longer had parliamentary representation as a result of its decision to boycott the legislative elections in 1986. UC confidence in the French Government had diminished considerably since 1981, when the party had hoped the Mauroy Government would facilitate independence by September 1982. Pidjot concluded that his parliamentary presence had been a waste of time. Of the reform proposals for New Caledonia he had tabled in the National Assembly since the 1960s all had been disregarded by a succession of governments.²⁸⁵ Just as working within the French parliamentary system had not produced lasting results satisfactory to the FLNKS, largely pacific protest and participation by FLNKS leaders in the territorial administration since 1986 had been ineffectual in furthering the FLNKS agenda. The reduction of regional funding in 1986, the annulment of regional budgets for 1987, the creation of funds to assist Europeans to re-establish themselves in rural areas, the replacement of the Land Office with the ADRAF, the French military escalation in tribal areas, lower emphasis on Melanesian identity in cultural policy, and the organisation of a self-determination referendum that Kanaks could not win, had not instilled the FLNKS with a conciliatory disposition. Kanak disillusionment with the rule of French law was aggravated by a Nouméa court's acquittal, on 29 October 1987, of charges against the Hienghène ambushers.²⁸⁶

Rather than quelling Kanak activism and removing the question of independence from territorial politics once and for all, the reforms of the Chirac Government ended up exacerbating existing political tensions in New Caledonia. On 12 March 1988 at a meeting at St Louis, north of Nouméa, the FLNKS executive decided to swing back to militancy to break out of its stalemate.²⁸⁷ As it had in late 1984, the FLNKS resolved to foment disorder in an attempt to force a reconsideration of government policy in Paris. In spite of the fact that Mitterrand's first term in office had not led to the fulfilment of Kanak demands for independence, either with Socialist or liberal-conservative governments in power, Tjibaou held out the prospect that the re-election of Mitterrand and the return of a Socialist Government would permit a reconsideration of the question of self-determination.²⁸⁸ This stance differed radically from the repudiation of the Socialists announced by the FLNKS charter in 1984. There were indications that Mitterrand was sympathetic, although he had not gone so far as to concede to the FLNKS demand for a restricted self-determination vote. He had however denounced the reforms of the Chirac Government as unnecessarily divisive and looked forward to the possibility of a reconciliation with the FLNKS.²⁸⁹

Not all of Tjibaou's hopes were pinned on the Socialists. In the meantime, the FLNKS adopted a more active response to the Chirac Government, assuming that violence would prompt change where peaceful protest had not. The member party of the FLNKS which advocated a more militant line was the UC. Other FLNKS members questioned the appropriateness of an active boycott. Doubts existed over whether the struggle committees were equal to the task, and it was feared that militant action might provoke a violent reaction from French loyalists and the forces of law and order,²⁹⁰ as had been the case with the Hienghène ambush in December 1984, and the shootings of Machoro and Nonnaro in January 1985. As had occurred in 1985 when the FLNKS abandoned militancy to cooperate under the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, in early 1988 Tjibaou employed the UC's majority following in the Front to push a new line. He apocalyptically presented the boycott as the last ditch chance for the Kanak people, claiming it entailed:

[...] la résistance à l'entreprise d'élimination du peuple kanak. La mobilisation sera musclée pour faire échec aux élections et à la mise en place du statut Pons. [...] Le gouvernement sera le seul responsable de tous les dérapages qui vont venir. Ça ne va pas être tendre. Il y aura peut-être encore du sang.²⁹¹

Blaming the Chirac Government for placing the FLNKS in a position where violence seemed the only choice was self-exculpation of the sort used by terrorist groups: we are absolved of responsibility for our actions because our adversary is evil. It was an exaggeration to state that government reforms constituted an attempt to eliminate the Kanak people. While Pons did not recognise the existence of a Kanak people, and the effects of his reforms were not beneficial to Kanak interests, Tjibaou gave a false impression. Had the FLNKS chosen to do so, under the Regional Autonomy Statute it could have received political representation in the Territorial Congress even though its influence at regional level had been diminished.

FLNKS struggle committees were mobilised, as they had been in November 1984, to actively disrupt the territory, particularly the elections on 24 April 1988. On the Grande Terre, sporadic confrontations occurred in March, April and May between armed Kanaks and gendarmes. On 24 April, Kanak activism partially disrupted the elections but, as in November 1984, did not prove capable of preventing them. Scattered roadblocks and pickets forced the closure of 31 of the 139 polling stations in New Caledonia.²⁹² Violence on the Grande Terre peaked on 2 May when a naval gunboat off the coast from Pouébo intervened to disperse around 30 Kanak activists with heavy machine gun fire.²⁹³

It was on Ouvéa that Kanak militants gained the lasting attention of Paris. In the Loyalty Islands the FLNKS boycott fell short of expectations. Militants on Ouvéa, Lifou and Maré were originally intended to go into action simultaneously but in the event only the Ouvéa struggle committee mobilised.²⁹⁴ A raid on the gendarmerie at Fayaoué two days before the elections on 24 April led to the killing of four gendarmes and the abduction of the surviving personnel.²⁹⁵ The operation was carried out by the Ouvéa struggle committee of the FLNKS, a polyglot formation comprised of members from the UC, FULK and Palika.²⁹⁶ The leaders of the struggle committee were Chanel Kapoeri, a UC Territorial Councillor, and Alphonse Dianou, the head of the UC youth section.²⁹⁷ Dianou normally resided in Nouméa, but had shifted back to Ouvéa for the operation. Initially, there was some uncertainty as to whether the FLNKS executive had condoned the operation. This question was clarified by an FLNKS political bureau communiqué issued on 24 April:

ce qui s'est passé à Ouvéa n'est pas une action isolée de quelques extrémistes ou de terroristes incontrôlés. Il s'agit bien au contraire d'une action unitaire s'inscrivant dans le cadre de la mise en échec du statut Pons décidée par le VII^e Congrès du FLNKS à Tibarama.²⁹⁸

The day before, three members of the FLNKS executive, Tjibaou, Yeiwené Yeiwené and Léopold Jorédié, had called on Chirac to withdraw French troops from Ouvéa, annul the territorial elections, and to open discussions on a new self-determination referendum more amenable to the FLNKS. Only then would the hostages be released.²⁹⁹

The captives were split into two groups by the members of the Ouvéa struggle committee. The gendarmes in one of these two groups were later released. The fate of the others was to become the central issue of a hostage incident which ended on 4 May when French army, marine and gendarme detachments stormed a grotto in the north of Ouvéa where 23 captives were still being held. In total, 25 men, including 19 Kanak activists, died as a result of the

raid on the Fayaoué gendarmerie and the assault on the cave.³⁰⁰ All of the captives held at the time of the assault were released through the efforts of the French military.³⁰¹

The conjunction of the storming with the presidential elections led to a new round of polemics in Paris. It did not pass unremarked that the assault had taken place four days before the second round of the presidential elections, which pitted Chirac against Mitterrand. The Chirac Government hailed the storming as a heroic feat in defence of the honour of France, and praised the military units involved for restoring the rule of law in New Caledonia.³⁰² RPR leaders blamed Mitterrand for the assault at Fayaoué, claiming that Kanak activists had been encouraged by his criticisms of government administration of New Caledonia, and had hoped for presidential leniency in response to their guerilla tactics should he be re-elected.³⁰³ The French Left in turn attacked the assault on the grotto for being excessively violent, and claimed Chirac had ordered the assault as a ploy to gain the votes of members of the extreme-right in the presidential election.

In many respects, the operation was too violent, although the same criticism could be made of the occupation of the Fayaoué gendarmerie by the Ouvéa struggle committee. Like the killings of the four gendarmes by Kanaks at Fayaoué, the deaths of four Kanak captives (Wenceslas Lavelloi, Waina Amossa, Alphonse Dianou and Samuel Wamo) while in the custody of the French military³⁰⁴ were morally reprehensible. That the number of deaths in each instance amounted to four suggests that *la loi du talion* had been in operation. Pons and Chirac had wanted a rapid resolution of the hostage situation by armed intervention, although their pressure on the military was initially met with opposition, notably from Captain Legorjus, commander of the GIGN.³⁰⁵ Legorjus, who acted as negotiator with the hostage takers, was reluctant to become involved in any rushed plan which might inadvertently cause the deaths of hostages. Faced with failing negotiations with the FLNKS executive in Nouméa, he later concluded that an assault was the only way of saving the lives of the hostages.

The theory that the assault was a vote-catching ploy neglected certain considerations. It was not Chirac who had planned the Fayaoué assault to coincide with the presidential elections, or the sequence of events which led to the hostage stand-off. Chirac did not have the unquestioning obedience of military leaders, notably Legorjus. Partial responsibility for the events that led to the coincidence of the assault on the grotto and the electoral period lies with the FLNKS, whose militant tactics were intended to pressure Paris at this sensitive time. The FLNKS also shared some culpability with the Chirac Government for the failure of negotiations which might have resulted in the hostages' release. In addition, leftist critics tended to neglect the fact that Mitterrand, Chirac's opponent in the presidential elections, gave his assent to the assault as head of the French armed forces. Without presidential approval the operation could not have taken place. It is contestable that Mitterrand would have approved the operation had he thought it might have hindered his re-election. Although Legorjus speculated that Mitterrand wanted the hostage situation resolved one way or another before the conclusion of the elections and his probable re-election so that blame could reflect on Chirac,³⁰⁶ it was most likely that the safety of the hostages overrode electoral considerations.³⁰⁷ Finally, if the assault was an electorally motivated attempt by Chirac to garner votes, it failed. Mitterrand was re-elected by a comfortable margin, although it should be noted that in New Caledonia, the vote was overwhelmingly pro-Chirac. (Tables 13, 14) As had been the case in 1981, the New Caledonian electorate was at odds with the national majority vote for Mitterrand.

By 1988 Pons appeared incapable of inspiring the peace and dialogue which he had hoped for in 1986. He had established the rule of democratic Republican law in New Caledonia, and had implemented his vision of the

**Table 13. French Presidential Elections, 1988.
National Results²**

First Round: 24 April

Registered voters	38,128,507
Votes cast	31,027,972
Turnout	81.38%
Valid votes	30,406,038

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Mitterrand (PS)	10,367,220	33.41
Chirac (RPR)	6,063,514	19.54
Barre	5,031,849	16.22
Le Pen (FN)	4,375,894	14.10
Lajoinie (PC)	2,055,995	6.47
Others	2,511,566	8.09

Second Round: 8 May

Registered voters	38,168,869
Votes cast	32,085,080
Turnout	84.06%
Valid votes	30,923,249

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Mitterrand	16,704,279	52.06
Chirac	14,218,270	44.31

Source: A. Cole & P. Campbell: *French Electoral Systems and Elections since 1789* p.151.

² Not including French votes cast in foreign countries.

**Table 14. French Presidential Elections, 1988.
New Caledonian Results**

First Round: 24 April

Registered voters	88,223
Votes cast	51,426
Turnout	58.29%
Valid votes	50,922

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Chirac (RPR)	38,025	73.94
Le Pen (FN)	6,308	12.27
Barre	3,115	6.06
Mitterrand (PS)	2,536	4.93
Lajoinie (PC)	169	0.33
Others	769	1.50

Second Round: 8 May

Registered voters	88,094
Votes cast	54,346
Turnout	61.69%
Valid votes	53,891

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Chirac	48,660	89.54
Mitterrand	5,231	9.63

Source: *Le Monde* 26 avril 1988, 10 mai 1988.

territory's future, but did so at the expense of alienating the FLNKS to a greater extent than the Socialists had, which led to a toll in human lives as Kanaks vented their discontent. The self-determination referendum, while reaffirming that the majority of voters in New Caledonia wished to stay French, aggravated rifts with Kanak nationalists rather than cementing over them. Moreover, the time of the Chirac Government in power was not long enough to ascertain whether their new territorial statute would have functioned as intended. Rather than solving New Caledonian problems, the interlude of liberal-conservative administration had served to aggravate them. It is a measure of the narrow perspectives of his Gaullist predecessors that, in spite of the RPR fulfilment of its reform schedule, in June 1988 Prime Minister Rocard was to find himself confronted with a territory more in need of urgent government intervention and mediation than in 1986.

Michel Rocard and the Matignon Accords

Accusations of who was to blame for the Ouvéa incident continued into June 1988. The incoming Socialist administration condemned the deaths in custody of Lavelloi, Amossa, Dianou and Wamo, and instigated an inquiry which confirmed their maltreatment.³⁰⁸ Meanwhile, New Caledonian leaders were in a state of shock. The realisation that worsening violent confrontation could develop into civil war produced a moderation of attitudes in the executives of the FLNKS and the RPCR.

The FLNKS reassessed the utility of maintaining its active boycott. The balance sheet of its actions was a death toll that was likely to continue to rise should violent protest continue, without any prospect of forcing the issue of independence. The boycott had fallen short of expectations. The New Caledonian elections of April and May 1988 had not been called off as a result of disruption caused by Kanak activism. The Front had not managed to achieve a full mobilisation of its struggle committees. On the Grande Terre, as on Maré and Lifou, most committees displayed an unwillingness to push confrontation with the French State to the extent that their counterparts on Ouvéa had. Struggle committees were constrained by their ill-preparedness for extended campaigning, and by concern for the consequences of French loyalist or military reprisals against Melanesian settlements in their areas. The military build-up in New Caledonia undertaken by the Chirac Government had a dissuasive effect on Kanak militants, although not in all cases, as a partial mobilisation was achieved. The FLNKS was confronted with the superior military strength of French forces in New Caledonia. Against its poorly armed, partially mobilised militants, who were no more than several hundred in number, by 1 May there existed a combined total of 12,000 men under arms deployed in New Caledonia: the equivalent of one man for every twelve civilians in the territory.³⁰⁹ The Ouvéa incident demonstrated that although the harassment tactics of the FLNKS could inconvenience the Chirac Government by gaining extensive media coverage in Paris at the height of the presidential elections, if it came to armed confrontation, the French military had superior firepower.

In an abrupt change of position, Lafleur also sought reconciliation. The RPCR turned away from a belligerent response to the FLNKS. Following the admission by the FLNKS that the Fayaoué operation was its responsibility, the RPCR had unsuccessfully called on Chirac to outlaw the FLNKS as a terrorist organisation.³¹⁰ Before the elections Henri Morini, the head of the RPCR security force, and his subordinates, had travelled into rural areas to mobilise bush militias in defence of farms and settlements. On 23 April, near Canala, a truck Morini was travelling in was hit by gunfire from Kanak activists. He was wounded and had to be hospitalised.³¹¹ An informal network of bush militias coordinated by the RPCR was kept on alert during the FLNKS boycott and into May, in case Kanaks should decide to burn and pillage the rural homes of

French loyalists, as they had during the first election boycott in 1984. After the re-election of Mitterrand, a sudden moderation of attitudes ensued in the RPCR executive. Contemplating the five years of Socialist administration that lay ahead, Lafleur realised it was in the best interests of his party not to persevere with its past belligerence to Socialist authority if he wished to promote in Paris reforms for the socio-economic development of the South. Continued antagonism toward the FLNKS would achieve neither peace nor economic prosperity for New Caledonia, but would instead lead to further destruction of life and property. The RPCR decided following the assault on the grotto in Ouvéa, after having described the FLNKS as a group of lawless terrorists that should be outlawed, to negotiate with the coalition in the hope of a return to peace. Discussions with FLNKS leaders were deemed preferable to their continued alienation.³¹²

By early June 1988 Lafleur and Tjibaou were displaying an openness to a negotiated solution in New Caledonia which had not existed since before the Nainville les Roches negotiations.³¹³ A dialogue mission sent by Rocard to New Caledonia on 18 May facilitated a reconciliation. The mission had been assigned the task of re-establishing political dialogue in the territory, a daunting task after years of deepening divisions. At the time of Rocard's appointment as Prime Minister on 12 May 1988, the future of New Caledonia was the most pressing issue that confronted him.³¹⁴ Once again, the contrast with New Caledonia's portfolio status in 1981 was striking.

Olivier Stirn, the new Minister to the DOM-TOM, announced on 18 May that the Pons Statute would be annulled.³¹⁵ Rocard had previously called into question the validity of Pons's policies for New Caledonia. In April 1987, he had written prophetically that the self-determination referendum would not diminish New Caledonian ethnic divisions and would lead to bloodshed.³¹⁶ In the same year he had also criticised the shortcomings of governments which tried to resolve problems in the DOM-TOM by recourse to statutes and dispensing aid.³¹⁷ He stressed instead the concept of signing development contracts between the State and regions in the DOM-TOM on the basis of consensual dialogue to stimulate local autonomy. As Prime Minister, Rocard called into question the use of formally democratic logic which discounted Kanak identity. He criticised Pons's tendency to disregard the FLNKS because of its lack of an electoral majority.³¹⁸ Once again, a change in philosophy had occurred in Paris. Unlike the intellectual renovations which accompanied reforms under Fabius and Pons, those brought about by Rocard were to take firmer root in New Caledonia. Just seven weeks after the Regional Autonomy Statute had been implemented, the achievements of Pons in New Caledonia seemed hollow.

The dialogue mission led to the arrangement of tripartite discussions between Kanak nationalists (from the FLNKS and LKS), the RPCR, and Rocard at the Hôtel Matignon in Paris from 23 June.³¹⁹ On 26 June the Matignon negotiations produced a document establishing a territorial *entente cordiale* signed by all participants.³²⁰ The bulk of the Matignon Accord was reaffirmed with minor modifications after further negotiations in Paris from 17 to 20 August 1988.³²¹ This second statement is referred to as the Oudinot Accord. For the purposes of this work it is grouped with the first agreement under the collective title 'the Matignon Accords'.

On 29 June the first part of the Matignon Accord was implemented with the transfer of New Caledonia's executive powers to the High Commissioner.³²² Following precedent established by the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute and by many decades of colonial administration, the Matignon Accord centralised power around the High Commissioner. The Executive Council was stripped of powers accorded to it by the Regional Autonomy Statute. This was a preliminary step to a one-year period of direct rule by the High Commissioner while new territorial administrative structures were installed. New Caledonia

**Table 15. French Legislative Elections, 1988.
National Results**

5, 12 June

Registered voters	37,945,582
Votes cast	24,944,792
Turnout	65.74%
Valid votes	24,432,095

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
PS	9,176,708	36.79	276
RPR	4,687,047	18.79	128
UDF	4,519,459	18.12	130
PC	2,765,761	11.09	27
FN	2,359,228	9.46	1
Others	923,892	3.70	13

Source: Cole & Campbell: *French Electoral Systems and Elections since 1789* p.162.

**Table 16. French Legislative Elections, 1988.
New Caledonian Results**

5 June

First constituency (Nouméa, Loyalty Islands)

Registered voters	45,216
Votes cast	24,257
Turnout	53.65%
Valid votes	23,623

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Lafleur (RPCR)	19,681	81.14
Georges (FN)	3,248	13.39
Cheval ¹	694	2.86

Second constituency (rest of the Grande Terre)

Registered voters	43,007
Votes cast	17,468
Turnout	40.62%
Valid votes	17,081

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Nenou (RPCR)	14,720	84.27
Fayard (FN)	2,361	13.52

Sources: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6 juin 1988; *Le Monde* 7 juin 1988.

¹ Jean Cheval was an independent candidate, advocating departmentalisation for New Caledonia.

would regain its administrative powers on 14 July 1989, after the election of a new Territorial Council. As in the past, executive control of the implementation of this raft of reforms would be exercised from Paris.

New elections would be held so that the FLNKS and LKS could regain territorial representation. As a result of the FLNKS and LKS boycott of the regional elections on 24 April 1988, loyalist parties had monopolised the Territorial Congress to the near exclusion of Kanak representation. Of the 48 seats established by the Regional Autonomy Statute, all except two went to loyalist parties.³²³ It was accepted by the parties to the Matignon Accords that the recasting of New Caledonia's future could not take place while Kanak nationalists remained excluded from political representation. Although the Territorial Councillors elected in April 1988 thereby had their legitimacy called into question, no doubts were cast on the New Caledonian results of the boycotted legislative elections in June 1988. (Table 16) Lafleur and Maurice Nenou, standing for re-election as RPR Deputies, were re-elected unopposed by FLNKS challengers.³²⁴ The Government considered it necessary to revise territorial representation, but challenging the results of national elections was never seriously contemplated. This position was held in spite of the fact that the FLNKS objected to new electoral boundaries drawn up under Pons for legislative elections in New Caledonia. Nouméa had been combined with the Loyalty Islands for one constituency, while the remainder of the Grande Terre comprised the other constituency. The effect was to practically guarantee the RPCR majority representation over the Loyalties, an area where majority electoral support was traditionally for the UC, as the numerical strength of the loyalist vote in Nouméa far outweighed the number of Kanak voters in the Loyalties. Lafleur and Nenou were re-elected in the legislative elections of March 1993, each with an absolute majority of votes cast in his constituency. (Table 22) Legislative elections were not controlled by the territorial statute. Their boycott by the FLNKS stemmed from its policy dating back to 1986, which held that their national representation was ineffectual, regardless of boundaries. The FLNKS ended up discarding its past objections to the electoral boundaries of the two constituencies when it presented two candidates for the legislative elections of March 1993.

Amid majority indifference in metropolitan France, national acceptance of the Matignon Accords was put to the test in a referendum on 6 November 1988. (Table 17) A national turnout of 36.92% of eligible voters constituted the lowest response to a French referendum since 1958.³²⁵ As the majority of those who voted, 70.47%, expressed approval for the Matignon Accords, they became law.³²⁶ A national referendum was used to affirm the Accords because of the greater democratic legitimacy attached to a direct consultation with the entire French electorate. Not insignificantly, this decision also precluded extended debate which might have led to complications and delays had the Matignon Accords been tabled as a bill before Parliament. The Rocard Government received only a relative majority in the National Assembly from the legislative elections of June 1988, (Table 15) which left it vulnerable to opposition filibustering. The referendum's air of legitimacy was undermined by a poor turnout. The 70.47% who voted for the Matignon Accords represented only 26.02% of French electors.

In New Caledonia the turnout was 63.24%. (Table 17) Although 52.37% of votes cast were for the adoption of the Matignon Accords, in certain communes opposition to them was high. Majorities in six of the 13 communes to be included in the South Province under the new statute voted against the accords. In Nouméa, the heartland of RPCR electoral support, 56.0% of voters cast 'no' votes, as did 73.46% in Farino, 54.67% in Dumbéa, 51.78% in Bourail, 50.53% in Mont Dore, and 47.67% in La Foa.³²⁷ These figures were signs of a combination of loyalist voter distrust of RPCR dialogue with the FLNKS and a Socialist Government, and the influence of the FN and RPR

representatives in Paris who opposed the referendum. It was speculated at the time that the RPCR might be on the verge of a mass desertion of electoral support to the extreme right for its signature of the Matignon Accords but this prediction did not eventuate in the provincial elections of June 1988. (Table 18) While for the RPCR results in these communes were unsettling, in November 1988 majority approval of the Matignon Accords was expressed in the remainder of New Caledonian communes.

Designed to re-establish civil order and permit decentralised economic, social and cultural reform, the Matignon Accords established a ten year development plan, at the end of which a territorial self-determination referendum would take place. In accepting a ten-year moratorium on self-determination the FLNKS assented in 1988 to a condition which its predecessor, the FI, had found reprehensible when it was made by Dijoud in February 1979.³²⁸ The terms of this future referendum differed in some important respects from those of the 1987 vote. Those eligible to vote in 1998 would include only inhabitants resident in the territory since 1988, and New Caledonians who had come of voting age since then.³²⁹ These conditions represented a compromise solution. They excluded more non-indigenous voters than either Fabius or Chirac had been prepared to, while failing to fulfil any previous FLNKS conditions for organising a self-determination referendum with restricted voter eligibility. The FLNKS had considerably moderated its past positions on self-determination in the pursuit of consensual dialogue with the French State. The RPCR too showed moderation in accepting these new eligibility conditions. Previously the three-month residency qualification adopted by the Chirac Government for participation in the self-determination vote of 1987 had marked the limit of the concessions the RPCR was prepared to accept.

New regional boundaries also reflected the consensual approach of the Matignon Accords. Under article 6, the four regions of the Regional Autonomy Statute were replaced by three provinces. (See Map 5) Whereas the Regional Autonomy Statute had divided most of the Grande Terre longitudinally, ending with a transverse cutting separating the three communes of the South from those of the East and West, the Matignon Accords employed a transverse division, roughly across the centre of the Grande Terre. This new delineation combined the predominantly European settlements of the west coast with the Melanesian ones of the east coast in the north of the Grande Terre. Under the Regional Autonomy Statute, the loyalist voters on the west coast had retained their administrative and political identity in the West Region as non-Kanaks formed an electoral majority there. Under the new division the FLNKS would be likely to gain majority control of the North Province because of the greater numbers of Kanak voters living on the east coast. On the other hand, the RPCR would be given majority control over a greater area than either the Regional Autonomy Statute or the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute had offered, including Bourail, the most populous settlement outside Nouméa, where the loyalist vote was strong, and the mining centre of Thio.³³⁰ This new structure was intended to create an electoral balance somewhere between those established by the two preceding statutes, which had in turn permitted FLNKS majority control over three of four regions, and two of four regions.

This balance was confirmed by the results of the first provincial elections held under the Matignon Accords on 11 June 1989. (Table 18) Votes for the FLNKS gave that party majority control over the North and Loyalty provinces, while the RPCR held a majority in the South. The elections repeated established electoral patterns in reaffirming the electoral strength of French loyalism in the South, and of Kanak nationalism in the northern half of the Grande Terre and in the Loyalty Islands. Loyalist parties continued to hold a majority of seats in the Territorial Congress, with 32 of the 54 seats set up under the new statutory arrangements. LKS and the FLNKS held one and 19 seats respectively. A new force, the Wallisian UO, won the remaining two seats, drawing on Wallisian

**Table 17: French Referendum on the Matignon
Accords
1988**

National Results: 6 November

Registered voters	38,039,735
Votes cast	14,043,134
Turnout	36.92%
For the Accords	9,896,298
Against the Accords	2,474,743

New Caledonian Results

Registered voters	88,401
Votes cast	55,908
Turnout	63.24%
For the Accords	29,284
Against the Accords	22,065

Sources: Official results cited in *Le Monde* 8 novembre 1988, 10 novembre 1988.

**Table 18: New Caledonian Provincial Elections
1989**

Territorial Results: 11 June

Registered voters	91,259
Votes cast	63,256
Turnout	69.31%
Valid votes	62,506

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPCR	27,789	43.93	27
FLNKS	17,878	28.26	19
FN	4,219	6.67	3
CD	3,213	5.08	2
UD	2,424	3.83	2
LKS	1,441	2.28	1
Others	5,542	8.76	0

Regional Results

	North	South	Loyalty
Registered voters	21,537	57,278	12,444
Votes cast	14,939	39,790	8,527
Turnout	69.36%	69.47%	68.53%
Valid votes	14,783	39,214	8,509

Party			
RPCR	4,041	20,856	2,892
FLNKS	9,371	4,595	3,912
FN	344	3,875	-
CD	361	2,745	107
UD	-	2,424	-
LKS	-	-	1,441
Others	666	4,719	157

Source: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 12 juin 1989.

support in the South. As they had under past statutes, Kanak representatives remained a minority in the Territorial Congress. After a decade of Kanak participation in territorial elections, the percentage of the vote accorded to Kanak parties had declined slightly. In the territorial elections of July 1979, the FI had gained 34.13% of votes cast.³³¹ In 1989, the FLNKS and the LKS gained a combined total of 30.54% of votes cast. (Table 18) Obtaining the electoral majority needed to win independence constitutionally was still a distant prospect for Kanak leaders.

The Councillors elected in the provincial elections assumed their functions in July 1989. Having scrapped the Regional Autonomy Statute, the Matignon Accords created new institutions whose salient powers did not however differ greatly from the bodies they replaced. (Table 19) Paris retained its extensive control over the territory and boosted the status of its representative in Nouméa. As he had done under Fabius, the High Commissioner reassumed executive control over New Caledonia. Under article 65 the High Commissioner was charged with representing and directing the territorial administration. The State generally maintained the powers it enjoyed under the Regional Autonomy Statute. Article 6 of the Regional Autonomy Statute and article 8 of the Matignon Accords, which outlined the powers of the State, were nearly identical. One exception was that under the new statute the State retained control over external relations, with the concession that the territory could negotiate foreign investment of up to 6MFF without prior approval. On the other hand, the High Commissioner was attributed command over the guiding principles of land reform, a response to the insider trading for territorial officials which the ADRAF had indulged in under the Chirac Government. The High Commissioner gained some control over primary education, excluding the areas of culture and language. Apart from these and other minor differences, article 6 would not have looked out of place in the text of the Regional Autonomy Statute. The Matignon Accords maintained continuity with preceding statutes in safeguarding the powers of the French State in New Caledonia. None the less greater leeway was given to initiatives at territorial or provincial level than under the preceding statute. For example article 88 allowed provincial or territorial leaders to propose negotiations with foreign governments in the Pacific region. This adjustment represented an innovation in terms of local autonomy, although New Caledonian leaders desirous of developing their relations overseas would remain dependent on state expertise in foreign affairs.

The specific responsibilities of the provinces conformed to most of the orientations of the Regional Autonomy Statute. Provincial representatives received more control over their own budgets than the previous regions had, and were reattributed powers over land reform which had been lost by the regions, but otherwise responsibilities at this level remained much the same as before. The major innovation was to be found in the implementation under articles 84 to 87 of annual state-provincial development contracts of the sort envisaged by Rocard in 1987. These enabled the establishment of direct links between Paris and the two FLNKS-controlled provinces, bypassing the RPCR-dominated Territorial Congress in the process. From 1990 to 1992 inclusive, 50.7% of contract funds were attributed to the North Province, and 18.3% went to the Loyalty Islands Province. The remainder, 31%, was allocated to the South Province.³³² Article 87, which instituted an investment fund for economic and social development, was not without precedent, but this aid was in practice to be distributed more freely in the North and in the Loyalty Islands than Pons's special development fund had been.

Neither were the Economic and Social Committee and the Consultative Custom Committee without precedent. Their advisory capacities to the State and to the territory were described in articles 59 and 60. Article 79 followed precedents dating back to 1985 in providing indemnities to New Caledonians whose property or health had been damaged or destroyed in political

confrontation. A measure which would not have been contemplated under Pons was the amnesty under article 80 to those who had committed crimes relating to civil disorder before 20 August 1988. This article however specifically excluded those guilty of murders. The limitation was imposed at the insistence of the Constitutional Council, which had rejected an FLNKS proposal in the negotiations of July 1988 of an amnesty for murder.³³³ This limitation was lifted in January 1990, when the Rocard Government promulgated a law extending the amnesty to those responsible for murder.³³⁴ Such leniency would have been unthinkable under Pons, as would have been the lessening of tensions needed for such legislation to be approved in Nouméa and in Paris.

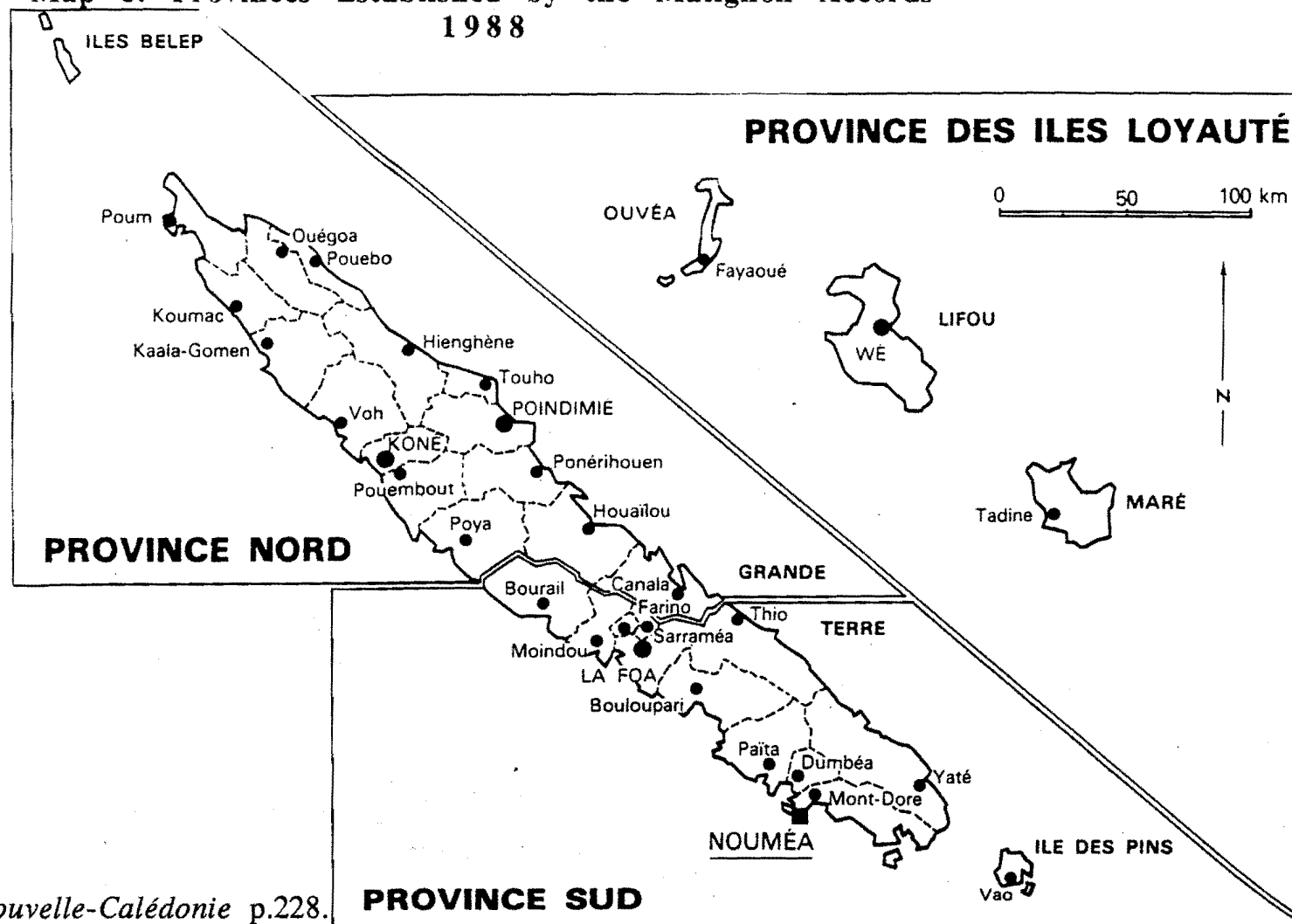
Rocard hoped to gain, and indeed achieved, a return to civil order in New Caledonia by granting or restoring to Kanak nationalists various concessions proscribed under Pons. Of particular importance was support offered by Rocard for provincial development.³³⁵ Article 85 of the Matignon Accords established the target of improving living conditions in rural areas by encouraging economic, educational and cultural activity there. Communications and public works would be expanded. Emphasis would be placed on offering educational facilities which would broaden opportunities for professional training. In proposing this, the Matignon Accords offered Kanaks the chance of building a stronger economic base in the provinces, and professional training, an area where Melanesians generally lagged behind the European population.³³⁶ This initiative cut two ways. It reinforced the FLNKS policy of furthering regional development as the basis for independence. And should Kanaks fail to gain independence in 1998, they would still enjoy greater economic power within a French New Caledonia than they had prior to 1988. Either way, such moves unavoidably rendered Kanak development dependent on Parisian finance and expertise.

Article 85 strengthened state support for Melanesian cultural promotion, although within a multicultural context, an orientation which harked back to the Dijoud Plan. This represented another of the compromise positions in the Matignon Accords: cultural policy which sat between the pluralism established in cultural policy under Pons, and the exclusive concentration on Melanesian culture by the Socialists between 1981 and 1986. Article 93 of the Matignon Accords embodied renewed government support for Melanesian culture by setting up the Agency for the Development of Kanak Culture.

Land reform, a topic of particular contention under Pons, was tidied up. Article 94 of the Matignon Accords retained the ADRAF, but its RPCR administrators had already been replaced by November 1988 and were the subject of an inquiry by the Ministry of Finance in 1988 and 1989. Fast track land deals conducted by the agency just prior to the advent of the Rocard Government were revoked, not without complaints from the RPCR. The official investigation was reassuring to the FLNKS, which was confident of tribal land claims receiving greater attention from the new administrators of ADRAF.³³⁷

FLNKS leaders signed the Matignon Accord in June 1988 to re-establish dialogue and regain access to territorial institutions after the failure of their militant option. Tjibaou abandoned militancy in the hope that dialogue would serve as the basis for progress toward independence and gaining more acceptable conditions for the FLNKS than the Regional Autonomy Statute had offered. To a limited extent the FLNKS got a better deal from the new provincial structure. FLNKS-dominated areas had more autonomy than under the preceding statute, and the development facilities at regional level offered under Rocard were more generous than those offered by Pons. It should be noted however that the State retained control over provincial budgets and natural resources. The provinces had limited capacity to raise their own funds, being restricted to levying tariffs on certain activities. The autonomy that the Matignon Accords offered existed within narrowly defined limits that in no way jeopardised state control over New Caledonia.

**Map 5. Provinces Established by the Matignon Accords
1988**



Source: Raluy: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.228.

Table 19: The Balance of Power under the Matignon Accords

Domaines	État	Territoire	Province
Droit et justice	Justice Organisation judiciaire Droit pénal, droit civil, droit commercial Procédure pénale Procédure civile Service public pénitentiaire et services relatifs à l'enfance délinquante	Droit coutumier Droit des assurances	
Enseignement et recherche	Enseignement primaire (définition des programmes, formation des maîtres, contrôle pédagogique) Enseignement du second degré Enseignement supérieur Recherche scientifique		Enseignement primaire (adaptation des programmes définis par l'État, dépenses de fonctionnement) Construction et entretien des collèges du 1 ^{er} cycle Enseignement agricole Possibilité d'organiser des services de recherche Bourses Internats
Transport et communication	Communications extérieures (navigation, dessertes maritime et aérienne, postes et télécommunications) Communication audiovisuelle	Réglementation de la circulation et des transports routiers Postes et télécommunications intérieures Réseau routier d'intérêt territorial Règles de police et sécurité en matière de circulation aérienne intérieure Ouvrages de transport d'énergie électrique d'intérêt territorial	Réseau routier d'intérêt provincial
Fiscalité		Impôts, droits et taxes perçus par le territoire (IRPP, BIC, LS, LRVM, TGI, patente, etc.)	Centimes additionnels à la patente et à la contribution foncière
Travail, emploi, et formation professionnelle	Principes fondamentaux du droit du travail et de la formation professionnelle	Organisation du marché du travail et de la formation professionnelle	Mesures d'application du droit du travail Mise en œuvre des actions de formation professionnelle
Action sociale et santé		Règlement de la santé et des régimes de protection sociale Construction et gestion des établissements de soins d'intérêt territorial (CHT)	Aide médicale gratuite Actions sanitaires et sociales (aides sociales, bienfaisance) Construction et gestion des établissements de soins d'intérêt provincial (dispensaire)
Service public	Fonction publique d'État	Fonction publique territoriale	Personnel contractuel de la province Agents de la fonction publique territoriale mis à sa disposition
Agriculture		Réglementation et organisation des services vétérinaires Réglementation de la police administrative intéressant les animaux et les végétaux	Agriculture, forêt, pêche lagunaire, élevage Mesures de soutien à la production Chasse
Commerce et finances	Commerce extérieur Relations financières avec l'étranger Autorisation d'investissements directs étrangers supérieurs à un certain seuil (fixé par décret)	Importations Marché intérieur (prix, concurrence, consommation) Répression des fraudes (poids et mesures)	Code des investissements Autorisation d'investissements directs étrangers inférieurs au seuil déterminant la compétence de l'État
Sport, tourisme et culture		Infrastructures et manifestations sportives et culturelles d'intérêt territorial	Sports, actions culturelles Tourisme Réglementation des jeux et des loteries
Urbanisme, environnement et droit foncier	Principes fondamentaux de la propriété foncière	Principes fondamentaux du droit de l'urbanisme Réglementation des marchés publics	Habitat Environnement et nuisances (air, bruit, installations classées, protection de la nature, sites et monuments)

Source: IEOM: *Exercice 1988. Rapport d'activité. Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.14.

Concessions made by the French State in the fields of provincial development, Melanesian culture and land reform, were counterbalanced by the concessions of the FLNKS. As has been mentioned, the acceptance of the voter eligibility criteria for the self-determination referendum in 1998 marked an abandonment of its various past positions on this issue. Tjibaou and the FLNKS delegation took this deal as the best they could get, in the hope that Melanesian population growth, the exclusion from the referendum of transients and new arrivals, the spread of popular support for independence, and the possible emigration to metropolitan France of French loyalists, would tip the balance in 1998.

This optimism was not shared by some other members of the FLNKS, who were reluctant to assent to the concessions made by their representatives in Paris. The UC called for a revision of the initial Matignon Accord at a meeting hosted by the Ndé tribe on 14 July 1988.³³⁸ Yann Céléné Uregei, the leader of the FULK, vehemently opposed the Matignon Accord, and called for Tjibaou's resignation at the FLNKS congress at Thio on 16 July 1988.³³⁹ At the FLNKS congress at Gossanah, on Ouvéa, on 23 and 24 July 1988, Tjibaou found himself subjected to criticism for having conceded too much in terms of the self-determination referendum, and for not having pushed hard enough in other respects.³⁴⁰ The Gossanah congress rejected the referendum conditions.³⁴¹ It decided that ten years was too long a period to wait for the self-determination referendum, which should be held instead before the next legislative elections. Although the prospect was constitutionally improbable, the congress claimed that should the Socialists lose power in the legislative elections in March 1993, the referendum could be abandoned by a liberal-conservative government. The congress contested the voter eligibility criteria of the Matignon Accord, proposing a vote limited to inhabitants with parents born in New Caledonia. The congress also called for a redefinition of regional boundaries which would enable the FLNKS to gain elected majorities over three of four regions, called for the State to surrender control of natural resources to the provinces, and demanded an amnesty on Kanaks imprisoned or wanted by the law for political actions from 1984 to 1988.

FLNKS dissatisfaction with the Matignon Accord was the reason for the second round of negotiations between its signatories in Paris in August 1988. Only one major concession was made to the FLNKS: the granting of an amnesty on politically-motivated crimes, with the exception of murder. Neither the RPCR nor the Rocard Government were prepared to meet other demands from the Front. The FLNKS delegation did not have a great deal of room for manoeuvre when faced with opposition from these quarters. Had the Front broken off discussions it would have been left at an impasse. A return to violent militancy would have been fruitless as a means of pushing for independence. A peaceful boycott would have achieved little for Kanak interests either. In both scenarios, the FLNKS would have given the impression of being recalcitrantly obstinate in the face of unprecedented overtures of good will from the RPCR and the Socialist Government in Paris. The FLNKS delegation therefore relented. The signature of the Oudinot Accord was represented by its signatories as a triumph for consensus,³⁴² and by Tjibaou as a stepping stone to independence,³⁴³ but resentment persisted within the ranks of the FLNKS over Tjibaou's failure to negotiate greater concessions. Kanak dissent would become evident upon the assassination of Tjibaou in May 1989 and the estrangement of two founding formations from the Front.

Kanak Loyalty Islanders have been most visible in the articulation of Kanak opposition to the Matignon Accords. Their different geographical and cultural situation from Kanaks on the Grande Terre has had an influence in their feeling of becoming distanced from the FLNKS, led mainly by Grande Terre mainlanders. In the Loyalties, widespread European settlement did not take place. In the absence of a large French presence, local tribes have retained land

ownership in the islands, along with a stronger sense of tribal identity. Having retained the integrity of their lands and their tribal identity, Kanak Loyalty Islanders tend to be less prone to compromise with France than Kanak mainlanders.

The assassinations of Tjibaou and Yeiwené, the FLNKS Vice-President, on 4 May 1989 were an ugly expression of the divisions between the FLNKS executive, and party activists on Ouvéa.³⁴⁴ These Ouvéans already felt that during the Ouvéa hostage incident, the FLNKS executive on the Grande Terre had not displayed sufficient support for local militants. The signature by FLNKS leaders of the Matignon Accords reinforced disenchantment on Ouvéa.³⁴⁵ Djubelly Wea, the man who murdered Tjibaou and Yeiwené, believed like other members of the Ouvéa struggle committee that the FLNKS executive had sold out to the French. Wea claimed that in accepting what were seen to be the Matignon Accords' unfavourable terms, the executive had been duped by the Rocard Government and had effectively renounced the goal of Kanak independence.³⁴⁶ Wea paid for that belief with his life, when killed by Tjibaou's bodyguards.

Doubt in the ranks of the FLNKS about the Matignon Accords was not confined to Ouvéa. Following the deaths of Tjibaou and Yeiwené, the FULK dissociated itself from the FLNKS. Yann Céléné Uregei, the leader of the FULK, had been notable for his lack of condemnation of their murders, and unconfirmed rumours spread that the party was in some way responsible.³⁴⁷ Uregei's opposition to the Matignon Accords was already well known. His party, alone among the members of the FLNKS, had refused to approve the Matignon Accords,³⁴⁸ and had boycotted the provincial elections in June 1989.³⁴⁹ That year the UC called for the departure of the FULK from the FLNKS due to the former's hostility to the Accords. The FULK declined to leave the FLNKS then, arguing that its adherence to the FLNKS charter was not dependent on its absence from the Matignon Accords.³⁵⁰ Before the FLNKS congress at St Louis from 20 to 21 January 1990, FULK leaders were informed that they would not be welcome, and party members who turned up were barred from entry.³⁵¹ The rift between the FULK and the FLNKS was formalised in January 1992, when the former dissolved itself to form a new party in broad opposition to the Matignon Accords and the FLNKS's signature to it.³⁵² Congrès Populaire held its first conference on Lifou, the home ground of the FULK, on 24 September 1992.³⁵³ The gathering, attended by 300 to 400 Kanaks, including a delegation of around 50 people from Ouvéa, asserted the importance of transcending party political differences, as well as preserving tribal traditions from erosion by European values.

FULK had always been a minority party in the FLNKS, with only a few hundred party members,³⁵⁴ although its opposition to the Matignon Accords has not been isolated. The independent LKS, with its following centred on Maré, has found itself taking a similar position. On 11 April 1991, its leader Nidoïsh Naisseline, announced the withdrawal of LKS from the Matignon Accords.³⁵⁵ He claimed that Socialist Governments were eroding custom authority through their policies and that the Matignon Accords were leading Kanaks away from independence. As can be seen from past election results LKS, like Congrès Populaire, enjoyed the adherence of a minority of Kanak voters, but the positions of these movements are locally important for the political balance in the Loyalty Islands Province, where the FLNKS held four of seven seats.

The USTKE, the trade union whose representatives adhered to the Matignon Accords as members of the FLNKS, has also distanced itself from political participation in them. In July 1989, the USTKE voted to withdraw from the FLNKS to concentrate on its primary concern, syndicalism.³⁵⁶ As the President of USTKE, Louis Kotra Uregei, is Yann Céléné Uregei's nephew, the union had been regarded with suspicion by the UC after the assassination of Tjibaou and Yeiwené. At the funeral service for Tjibaou and Yeiwené in

**Table 20: New Caledonia's Population by Ethnic Group
1989**

Group	Number	% of Population
Total Population	164,173	100
Melanesians	73,598	44.8
Europeans	55,085	33.6
Wallisians	14,186	8.6
Indonesians	5,191	3.2
Tahitians	4,750	2.9
Vietnamese	2,461	1.5
Ni-Vanuatu	1,683	1.0
Other Asians	642	0.4
Others	6,577	4.0

Source: INSEE: *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie: principaux résultats du recensement 1989* p.21.

Nouméa in May 1989, an USTKE delegation was turned away by UC members for this reason.³⁵⁷ Although the USTKE has not disavowed its participation in the Matignon process, it has expressed reservations over the agreement. Louis Uregei has stated that the USTKE still supports certain measures in the Matignon Accords, even if not their overall implementation.³⁵⁸

In spite of this minority Kanak dissent over adherence to the Matignon Accords, the FLNKS has continued supporting them.³⁵⁹ The disenchantment expressed by the leaders of FULK, a minor party with three or four hundred members, LKS, a party with only one seat in the Territorial Congress, and the qualified reservations of a trade union, did not count as opposition which threatened FLNKS participation in the Accords. Its partnership with the State and the RPCR has persisted in the face of this marginal dissent.

Dissent over adherence to the Matignon Accords has also circulated in the ranks of the RPCR. Lafleur, like Tjibaou, had the task of convincing his rank and file of the need to adopt the Matignon Accord in July 1988. He had less trouble in this respect than Tjibaou. On 23 July 1988, at its congress at Mont Dore, the RPCR unanimously approved the orientations of the Matignon Accord.³⁶⁰ The national referendum on the Matignon Accords in November 1988 proved that not all of New Caledonian loyalist voters were as positive about the agreement as the RPCR leadership.³⁶¹ Their negative votes and abstentions were respectively a response to FN rejection of the Accords, and to RPR disapproval of ratifying them by a national referendum. The FN, alone among French parliamentary parties,³⁶² denounced the Matignon Accords for their promotion of decentralisation and for supposedly placing New Caledonian links with the Republic at risk in 1998.³⁶³ As was the case with Kanak dissent on the fringes of the FLNKS over adherence to the Accords, this extreme right challenge to RPCR adherence to the agreement failed to develop into a threat to its electoral hegemony in New Caledonia.

RPCR assent to the Matignon Accords was given because they were not fundamentally threatening to loyalist interests. The development period the agreement established worked to the economic advantage of the South as well as to the North and the Loyalty Provinces, and fulfilled party policy of encouraging economic growth.³⁶⁴ As the provincial elections demonstrated in 1989, the new provincial structure permitted the reaffirmation of the electoral dominance of the RPCR in the South, and did not threaten its territorial electoral majority. As for the self-determination referendum, the RPCR was confident that, under the conditions of the Matignon Accords, French loyalism would be triumphant in 1998.³⁶⁵

Not only was the RPCR confident that the Matignon Accords posed no menace to ties with France, RPCR leaders also felt that the ten year development period would lead to a softening and eventual abandonment of support for independence. Having experienced the benevolence of state funding for regional development, it was argued, Kanaks would realise it was in their best interests to remain French rather than to accept the uncertainties of independence. The veracity of this thesis had been neither conclusively confirmed nor disproved by the early 1990s. On 27 April 1991, Lafleur suggested hopefully that the negotiation of a consensual solution to the differences the RPCR had with the FLNKS might lead to the abandonment of the self-determination referendum.³⁶⁶ The FLNKS, then holding a congress at La Foa, did not respond to Lafleur's comments. At its La Foa congress and at its Touho congress from 29 to 31 August 1992, the FLNKS determined that obtaining independence through participation in the Matignon Accords remained its fundamental goal.³⁶⁷

The RPR was at odds with the RPCR at the time of the referendum on the Matignon Accords. RPR leaders doubted the capacity of the Rocard Government to establish lasting peaceful dialogue between Kanaks and loyalists, and the suspicion persisted from the time of the Lemoine Statute that the Socialists might be attempting to lead New Caledonia into independence. The

willingness of Lafleur to cooperate with the FLNKS and the Socialists left him in disagreement with Chirac. While in July 1988 the RPR had at first expressed tentative approval of the reconciliation initiated under Rocard,³⁶⁸ and Chirac had deigned to meet Tjibaou in October 1988,³⁶⁹ Gaullists later concluded that the referendum was a trap. The RPR advised its followers to abstain from voting in the referendum of November 1988.³⁷⁰ To vote against the Matignon Accords would have appeared a negative, disruptive reaction, but to vote for them would have implied a renunciation of past RPR policy conduct in New Caledonia.³⁷¹ Chirac preferred the Matignon Accords to be approved by Parliament rather than by referendum, so that the RPR and other parties could influence their contents, and so that the final law could be more easily overridden by future legislation.³⁷² In October 1988 the RPR expressed a lack of confidence in the capacity of the Rocard Government to oversee the Accords impartially, an odd position from a party whose representatives had been less than impartial in government from 1986 to 1988. The RPR was in addition hostile to the voter eligibility criteria for the self-determination referendum in 1998, asserting that the conditions used for the self-determination vote of 1987 had been adequate. Alain Juppé, the RPR Secretary-General, stated that the Matignon Accords would be open to revision should his party return to government.³⁷³

Juppé's comment remained applicable during the period of Socialist government until March 1993. The RPR remained dissatisfied with the structure of the Accords. Juppé maintained into 1993 the RPR position that the legislation needed adjusting.³⁷⁴ However in June 1991, showing signs of some restraint, Juppé had promised Burck, the UC President since 1989, that the RPR would not call the Matignon Accords into question if his party came to power in March 1993.³⁷⁵ The New Caledonian High Commissioner, Alain Christnacht, felt in 1992 that the RPR would not repeat the mistakes it made in New Caledonia between 1986 and 1988. He stated in November 1992 that the RPR should proceed more carefully in its second period of cohabitation. He supported this claim by pointing out that, unlike its time in opposition from 1981 to 1986, from 1988 to 1992 the party had engaged in constructive dialogue with Kanak leaders.³⁷⁶ This theory was put to the test under Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, whose appointment in April 1993 marked the beginning of a second period of cohabitation, one which should last until 1995. The observation by the FLNKS in July 1988 that the arrival of another RPR-led administration could lead to a revision or abandonment of the Matignon Accords showed no signs of being fulfilled from March 1993. In the first few months there was no announcement of changes comparable to those made by Pons upon his appointment as Minister to the DOM-TOM in March 1986. The legislative elections of March 1993 (Table 21) gave the RPR/UDF coalition the largest parliamentary majority of any French political group since the 1830s. Dominique Perben, the new Minister to the DOM-TOM, indicated in June 1993 that socio-economic change, rather than statute reform, was his preliminary concern. Perben's message to the Territorial Congress during his first official visit to Nouméa in June 1993 consisted of images of governmental calm and the exercise of impartial administrative continuity.³⁷⁷

Doubts expressed by Juppé in 1988 concerning the capacity of the Socialists to manage the Matignon Accords impartially had not been justified by March 1993. The legislation lasted through five years of Socialist administration, a longevity which territorial reforms from Dijoud through to Pons failed to achieve. In May 1991 Mitterrand affirmed to Paul Néaoutyine, the FLNKS President, that he would act as the ultimate guarantor of the fulfilment of the Matignon Accords.³⁷⁸ This comment was offered as reassurance following the resignation of Rocard as Prime Minister earlier that month. The two Prime Ministers who followed Rocard, Edith Cresson and Pierre Bérégovoy, both stated support for the Matignon Accords.³⁷⁹ Mitterrand's fulfilment of his constitutional duties toward the Matignon Accords, reaffirmed

**Table 21. French Legislative Elections, 1993.
National Results**

First Round: 21 March

Registered voters	38,881,564
Votes cast	26,796,142
Turnout	68.92%
Valid votes	25,378,158

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPR/UDF	10,074,796	37.60	80
PS	4,874,978	18.19	0
FN	3,152,543	11.76	0
PC	2,331,399	8.70	0
Others	4,944,442	18.45	0

Second Round: 28 March

Registered voters	33,714,568
Votes cast	22,775,879
Turnout	67.55%
Valid votes	20,616,533

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
RPR/UDF	11,347,846	49.82	371
PS	6,459,723	28.36	67
FN	1,168,160	5.13	0
PC	951,213	4.18	24
Others	625,946	2.75	34

Source: A. Chaussebourg & T. Ferenczi (eds.): *Elections législatives de mars 1993* pp.63, 77.

**Table 22. French Legislative Elections, 1993.
New Caledonian Results**

21 March

First constituency (Nouméa, Loyalty Islands)

Registered voters	48,047
Votes cast	27,715
Turnout	57.68%
Valid votes	26,732

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Lafleur (RPCR)	14,240	51.38
Ukeiwé ¹	4,288	15.47
Wamytan (FLNKS)	3,829	13.82
Georges (FN)	1,519	5.48
Others	2,856	10.30

Second constituency (rest of the Grande Terre)

Registered voters	46,592
Votes cast	26,696
Turnout	57.30%
Valid votes	25,888

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Nenou (RPCR)	14,015	52.50
Jorédié (FLNKS)	7,716	28.90
Guillemard ²	2,269	8.50
Others	1,888	7.07

Source: *Le Monde* 23 mars 1993.

¹ Ukeiwé stood as an independent, right-wing candidate.

² Justin Guillemard stood as an independent, right-wing candidate.

in February 1993,³⁸⁰ should last until the end of his second septennate in 1995. Presidential support for the legislation beyond 1995 is less certain.

Just as government backing in Paris of the Matignon Accords may not endure until 1998, so too in New Caledonia attitudes may change. Whether or not the Matignon Accords last until 1998 may depend to a great extent on whether the FLNKS believes itself capable of winning independence by popular vote. Should this appear improbable, then Kanak nationalists could return to their boycott tactics of past years. Rocard stated in July 1988 that Kanak nationalists had a good probability of gaining independence in ten years' time. By his estimation then, Melanesians would comprise over 50% of the electoral body by 1998.³⁸¹ Another official estimate differed from that of Rocard. A confidential DOM-TOM Ministry report in 1988 estimated that if no metropolitan French left New Caledonia between 1988 and 1998, Melanesians would represent 44.5% of the electorate in the referendum.³⁸² The report added optimistically that if 16,000 eligible métro voters left New Caledonia between 1988 and 1998, then Melanesians would enjoy the backing of 53% of the electorate. This scenario is improbable. The departure of just under 10% of the total New Caledonian population in 1989 (Table 20) before 1998 would represent a drastic demographic shift. These ethnically based statistics are far from conclusive in indicating future support for local sovereignty. Moreover not all Melanesian votes in 1998 will be for independence. In 1985, around 20% of Melanesian votes went to loyalist parties.³⁸³ The FLNKS employed this statistical assumption, and estimated in July 1988 that Kanak nationalism would gain the support of 36% of voters in 1998.³⁸⁴ Although plausible, this total of 36% was slightly higher than the level of combined support for Kanak nationalist parties in past territorial elections.

Disregarding speculative projections, and considering the evidence of past elections alone, it is clear that Kanak nationalism has not had and does not enjoy the following of an absolute majority of the New Caledonian electorate. The results of the territorial elections unmarred by FLNKS boycotts, those of 1979, 1985 and of 1989 (Tables 8, 18) confirm this assessment, as do the first legislative elections which the FLNKS contested in March 1993. (Table 22) In March 1993, the two Kanak candidates between them gained 20.23% of votes cast in the two constituencies. Whether or not Kanak nationalists lodge sufficient votes to gain independence in 1998 will depend in part on how many of them participate in the ballot, how many of them attain voting age between 1988 and 1998, and on whether Kanak nationalists can garner enough non-Melanesian votes to tip the balance.³⁸⁵ On the strength of the existing electoral balance, it appears French loyalism will be reaffirmed in the 1998 self-determination vote.

Kanak Development: Towards Integration or Independence?

Apart from disillusionment with the shortcomings of militant activism, the FLNKS signed the Matignon Accords because they presented avenues for Kanak development. Since the time of cooperation with the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute in 1985 members of the FLNKS executive had been aware of the handicaps of attempting to found a sovereign nation-state with a largely rural, tribal support base in a territory where non-Melanesian immigrants dominated the cash economy. Under the Matignon Accords the strategy of the FLNKS was to employ state development funding to improve the socio-economic standing of the North and the Loyalties. Such activity would, the theory went, endow Kanaks with the infrastructure upon which to found the Republic of Kanaky.³⁸⁶ The inevitable drawback is the inherently dependent position in which it places the FLNKS with regard to the French State.

The level of Melanesian dependence on non-Melanesian expertise was apparent with the construction near Nouméa of the Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre, which began in 1993. This monumental piece of architecture,

incorporating Melanesian design features and European engineering techniques, was funded with 320MFF from the French presidential budget, and was designed by an Italian architect, Renzo Piano.³⁸⁷ The project is symbolic of the extent to which the affirmation of Melanesian identity under the Matignon Accords is reliant on the French State.

The dependence of the FLNKS on state funding for development is reflective of a wider territorial economic dependence that has persisted into the 1990s. It can be observed that New Caledonian dependence on mainland France has yet to substantially diminish. The coverage of import payments by exports fell slightly from 53.4% in 1990 (Table 6) to 52% in 1991.³⁸⁸ Given its mineral wealth, estimated to include between 20 and 40% of global nickel resources,³⁸⁹ chrome, copper, cobalt and manganese,³⁹⁰ as well as its largely unexplored maritime resources, New Caledonia has great economic potential. The territory has the capacity to increase its financial self-sufficiency, but this expansion may ultimately be restricted by its small population base, its comparative isolation from major markets, and the level of development capital available. Criticism of New Caledonian dependence on state aid persists, particularly from commentators opposed to the islands' continued status as a French territory.³⁹¹ It is true that the level of aid per capita in New Caledonia is among the highest in the insular South Pacific.³⁹² But compared to the rest of the DOM-TOM, the New Caledonian level of economic self-sufficiency is high. Thanks to the presence of its mining industry, and despite its drawbacks, New Caledonia is financially the most self-reliant part of the DOM-TOM.³⁹³ New Caledonian economic difficulties are far from being as pronounced as those of Réunion, with unemployment affecting 40% of its workforce in 1992,³⁹⁴ and exports in real terms which covered 8.8% of the value of imports in 1990.³⁹⁵ Although by metropolitan French standards, New Caledonia was not particularly self-reliant, compared to the rest of the DOM-TOM it had attained an enviable level of self-sufficiency and economic growth.

Using New Caledonian GDP in 1974 as a base value of 100%, annual territorial production increased from 93% in 1981 to 146% in 1988.³⁹⁶ But the economic structure of the territory has not been fundamentally altered. The dominant role in the territorial economy of mining and the tertiary sector has been largely unaffected by French government policy since 1981. The financial contributions of nickel mining and civil service salaries will continue to play a determining role in local economic well-being until long after the Matignon Accords come to an end. Metallurgy and mining comprised 23.07% of territorial GDP in 1988, a climb from its level of 15.93% in 1980, reflecting a general climb in international nickel prices since the late 1970s.³⁹⁷ The plethora of legislation implemented in New Caledonia, and the introduction of the Matignon Accords, have encouraged the continued presence of a proportionately large number of state and territorial civil servants. Administration accounted for 22.51% of GDP in 1980, and increased slightly to 23.99% of GDP by 1988.³⁹⁸ The proportionally marginal status of agricultural production remained a constant during the 1980s, in spite of various government attempts to revive local agricultural production. In 1980, agricultural production totalled 2.99% of GDP; this figure had declined to 1.59% of GDP by 1988.³⁹⁹ State development efforts in the 1980s to encourage commercial agricultural production by Melanesians did not result in a surge in activity. Coffee cultivation, the domain of Melanesian tribes, accounted for approximately 2% of total territorial agricultural production in 1990.⁴⁰⁰ Most tribal agriculture consisted of subsistence cultivation, concerning which statistics were not recorded. In 1990, 78% of commercial agricultural production in the territory came from the South Province, 21% from the North, and 0.5% from the Loyalties.⁴⁰¹ These proportions reflected the financial importance of meat and vegetable production, fields of largely European and Asian activity along the west coast of the Grande Terre.

While sector growth predicted in tourism by the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM did occur, progress has been erratic. After a marked decline in the mid-1980s, the total number of visitors to New Caledonia in 1990 was 8.6% higher than ten years before. (Table 9) Total visitors fell from 85,213 in 1990 to 80,930 in 1991.⁴⁰² This trend continued into 1992, the result of high accommodation and living expenses in New Caledonia, accentuated by a decline in the values of the Australian and New Zealand dollars compared with the French Pacific Franc.⁴⁰³ In spite of this downturn, tourism should continue to expand as Japanese arrivals increased during the 1980s.⁴⁰⁴ The yen has been more stable than the Australian and New Zealand dollars, and as Japanese tourists tend to have higher incomes than their Australian and New Zealand counterparts, local prices are not perceived by Japanese as being so high.

Fisheries, the other area of great potential mentioned by the Eighth Plan, expanded too, although not as far as had been expected, and in a direction with unencouraging implications for local enterprise. Two local European attempts at developing industrial-based fishing companies collapsed in the mid-1980s following inadequate catches.⁴⁰⁵ Three Melanesian companies which established small-scale commercial operations in the early 1980s also collapsed.⁴⁰⁶ Coastal fishing by locals is predominantly for New Caledonian consumption. Most commercial European fishermen are based in Nouméa and supply the local market, while the majority of Melanesian fisherman do so on an artisanal basis, serving tribal needs.⁴⁰⁷ Deep sea fishing is the domain of foreign trawlers which pay fishing levies to the territory. This practice began in territorial waters in February 1978. By 1991, 52 Japanese vessels were authorised to fish in the New Caledonian EEZ. In exchange for a maximum annual combined catch of 2,225t, they paid 36MF CFP.⁴⁰⁸ In March 1991, the first Franco-US fishing accord was concluded, allowing 14 American ships to fish simultaneously, at a total cost of 18MF CFP in access rights, and a license payment of 750,000F CFP per vessel.⁴⁰⁹ While providing returns, these arrangements are indicative of the limits of local fishing enterprise. In the field of aquaculture, specifically prawn production, local initiatives have fared better. Aquaculture in New Caledonia progressed beyond the experimental stage, and by the 1990s had become an area of increasing export activity.⁴¹⁰ As with tourism, the expansion of commercial activity in New Caledonian waters should continue, but will be slow due to the small scale of local operations.

Although informed assessment of the end result of the Matignon Accords will retain elements of speculation until after 1998, some analysis of their development achievements to date can none the less be made. The extent to which the consensual solution offered by the Matignon Accords meets the sometimes conflicting demands of indigenous Melanesians is a major issue. Dijoud's recognition of Melanesian concerns in formulating policy, considered innovative in the late 1970s, has since been recognised as an essential element for productive change under the Matignon Accords. Under the Socialists from 1981 to 1986, recognition of Kanak specificity was introduced into government policy, only to be discarded under Chirac, then reintroduced by Rocard. Political divisions in Paris and in Nouméa stalled the implementation of durable Giscardian, Socialist and Gaullist administrative reforms. Attention below is devoted to considering socio-economic reform achievements under the Matignon Accords and their consequences for Melanesian and Kanak identity, before postulating where these efforts might lead.

Tensions accompanying the Matignon Accords hinge on the extent to which development is to be accompanied by Melanesian integration into the economic, social and cultural values of New Caledonia's immigrant population. The difficulty resides in ascertaining exactly what Melanesian values are. The New Caledonian population of over 73,000 Melanesians in 1989 (Table 20) were not the homogeneous Kanak people they have been portrayed as being by Kanak nationalists and their supporters.⁴¹¹ The status of the FLNKS as the

privileged mouthpiece of Kanak interests under the Matignon Accords tends to act detrimentally to the interests of those Melanesians who do not share the goals of the Front. Divisions between Kanaks under the Matignon Accords, mentioned in the preceding section and detailed further below, highlight the pluralistic nature of the indigenous population. Such divisions have been skimmed over in the only academic work published by 1993 on the implications of the Matignon Accords for indigenous Melanesian development. Published in 1993, Isabelle Leblic's *Les Kanak face au développement. La voie étroite* makes a cardinal analytic error in assuming that the word 'Kanak' is synonymous with 'Melanesian'. Although her training as an ethnologist, and her extensive field work in New Caledonia from 1983 might have led her to conclude otherwise, her work habitually makes reference to "la société kanak", as a single entity, when no such homogeneity exists. The linguistic and tribal divisions among Melanesians in New Caledonia contradict such an assumption, as do political divisions among Kanaks, and the existence of loyalist Melanesians who do not consider themselves to be Kanak.

Furthermore, Leblic tacitly considers the FLNKS to be the sole arbiter of the future of the Kanak people. After lengthy description of traditional Melanesian values, she turns to the indigenous response to development issues, although she does so solely through the policies of the FI and the FLNKS.⁴¹² This approach is selective, and discounts minority currents of Melanesian opposition to the FLNKS. The recognition under the Matignon Accords of the FLNKS as a privileged partner in ongoing development in New Caledonia has been seen by some custom authorities as posing a threat to their established privileges in the tribal milieu. Kanak party authority, while sometimes coinciding with custom authority, as in the case of Naisseline, who is both a high chief on Maré and the leader of LKS, represents an inherent challenge to the authority of tribal chiefs. Kanak nationalism assumes a subordination of the tribe, the central unit in traditional Melanesian society, to the greater interests of a Kanak Republic. As Burck, the UC President, pointed out at a UC meeting at Nakéty on 23 January 1993: "L'indépendance, ce n'est pas le régime des castes féodales et des royaumes héréditaires".⁴¹³ Ironically, this subordination of parochial interests to national unity follows a French Republican model, not a Melanesian one.

The development priorities of the FLNKS under the Matignon Accords have at times clashed with custom authority. A notable case occurred on Lifou. Early in 1991 the FLNKS Mayor of Lifou, Cono Hamu, leased land from a clan for port construction at Wé. Another clan contested ownership of the land and embarked on a campaign against Hamu with the support of two of Lifou's three great chiefs. Roadblocks went up, and houses were burnt down. Hamu was declared *persona non grata* on Wetr and Löessi tribal domains and he was hospitalised in 1991 after being assaulted.⁴¹⁴ The dispute flared again at the end of November 1992, when Wetr and Löessi chiefs occupied the Wé town hall in protest at ongoing port construction.⁴¹⁵ In January 1993 Richard Kaloi, the FLNKS President of the Loyalty Islands, referred to the incident obliquely in calling for an end to local divisions and squabbling. His response, in line with FLNKS adherence to the Matignon Accords, was an appeal for unity and dialogue.⁴¹⁶ Disunity showed no immediate evidence of dissipating. The following month Hamu resigned from his post in the face of tribal opposition and attempted to reassert his authority through re-election. A municipal by-election, which had the distinction of being the first in New Caledonia to be contested by a custom candidate, Macate Wénéwa, allowed Hamu to re-establish his electoral legitimacy, although without silencing his critics.⁴¹⁷

Kaloi holds that Kanak development lies through the mixing of custom and European modernity,⁴¹⁸ but as the Lifou dispute demonstrated, this is not necessarily a comfortable mix. Melanesian custom chiefs justifiably see FLNKS cooperation with the French State under the Matignon Accords as furthering

Melanesian integration into French society. Under the Matignon Accords, the FLNKS has reaccepted the principles of French electoral democracy which it once rejected.⁴¹⁹ Along with its re-entry into French democratic mechanisms, FLNKS acceptance of the Matignon Accords involved an acceptance of French state development methods and funding. These administrative orientations have led the North and the Loyalty Provinces to promote capitalism and entrepreneurial activities. If Kanaks are to conform to European economic models, which the North and the Loyalties have accepted to some extent, they have a great deal of catching up ahead before approaching the level of economic development in the South Province. The South has numerous advantages in possessing Nouméa, the only large town, and largest port, as well as Tontouta international airport, the Doniambo nickel smelter, the Yaté hydroelectric dam, and the largest pool of skilled labour.

However some effort has been exerted to close the gap. Kanak integration into the European economy has led to provincial investments in enterprises once the domain of European owners. The state-assisted purchase by the North Province in April 1990, of the SMSP, Jacques Lafleur's mining company at Ouaco, is the most prominent symbol of this trend. The SMSP purchase, criticised in some quarters as being a very profitable deal for Lafleur and possibly a bad investment for the North Province,⁴²⁰ marked the entry of major Kanak investment in mining. This entry was made by means of a company established under the public authority of the North Province. At Canala, a local private initiative by Kanaks led to the reopening of a nickel mine and to the establishment of the Kanak Mining Company. Employing 60 Melanesians, this company began exporting nickel to Japan in 1993.⁴²¹ The importance of mining in the territory has prompted Kanak leaders to participate in a market where the potential for profit can be great, as can the potential for commercial failure, depending on international commodity prices.

Kanak commercial interests have also spread into tourism. Fourteen hotels with a total of 197 rooms have been established in the North Province under the Matignon Accords, including a branch of Club Med at Hienghène, which opened in 1992.⁴²² Club Med set up on Ouvéa too, one of 11 hotel projects begun in the Loyalty Islands in an attempt to increase the provincial share of New Caledonian tourism profits.⁴²³ But Nouméa has kept its majority share of the tourist market in New Caledonia due to its existing large network of accommodation, and to 665 additional rooms planned for the construction of the Doh Sheraton Hotel and the Pointe Mangin Hotel.⁴²⁴ The North Province, realising that Nouméa is the most profitable area of New Caledonian tourism, purchased in November 1992 a majority interest in the Nouméan Casino Royale, the Hotel Ibis and the Surf Novotel. Surf Novotel was the largest hotel in New Caledonia at the time of its construction in 1987, and the Casino Royale was likewise a prestigious investment.⁴²⁵

Large-scale Kanak investment in mining and high-prestige tourism operations followed well-established patterns of French commercial initiative. Micro-scale investment at tribal level has no such precedent and is more problematic.⁴²⁶ Whether the implementation of the Matignon Accords can effect positive change at tribal level to the satisfaction of traditional values is uncertain. Rural Melanesians now have better access to roads, schools, hospitals, electricity and running water thanks to public works projects financed under the Accords, although questions surround the future status of these people. The major issue is the extent to which the tribal milieu should become westernised in order to conform to French development models.

A lack of employment opportunities persists, with a 36% unemployment rate in the Loyalty Islands in 1989, and a 21% rate in the North.⁴²⁷ This situation was presented by the New Caledonian High Commission as a pressing challenge which needed to be addressed.⁴²⁸ However whether Melanesians living in tribes really count as unemployed depends on one's cultural values.

Those not in full-time paid employment contribute to tribal subsistence economies. Is it preferable that these societies should be further eroded by Western values of individual achievement, private ownership and profit? Conversely, should New Caledonia's tribal population experience a materially impoverished existence while the local urbanised population enjoys a modern, consumer lifestyle? These questions are not merely rhetorical, but pose issues with which all New Caledonian Melanesians, Kanak or not, must grapple.

Judged either by custom values or by European economic values, unemployment may or may not be a problem. Traditionally, members of Melanesian tribes have lived outside the cash economy, on subsistence agriculture, mixed with some paid seasonal employment at most. Tribal reliance on paid employment has been increasing since the 1940s, a trend which has shown no sign of abating under the Matignon Accords. As European economic values spread in the tribal milieu, with their emphasis on personal achievement, ownership and profit, as opposed to the communal orientation of the tribe, the authority of traditional structures has been undermined. Traditional Melanesian economic values, centred on tribal subsistence and collective ownership, with barter as the basis for exchange, have been correctly gauged by the FLNKS as not offering a strong financial basis on which to build Kanak independence. By promoting increased Melanesian integration into the New Caledonian cash economy, the FLNKS has contributed to weakening custom authority.

Land issues are symptomatic of differing cultural perceptions between Kanak administrators and tribal elders, as has been seen in the case of the dispute at Wé, on Lifou. As well there exist between Kanak tribal elders and the French State differing perceptions of land reform. The Matignon Accords have increased Melanesian land ownership. Land distribution since 1988 has been beneficial to individual Melanesians, and has benefited tribal landowners to a greater extent. Between 1989 and 1991, land redistributed to Melanesian tribes amounted to 48,417.8ha, while individual Melanesians received 38,833.9ha. Redistribution to non-indigenous inhabitants included 9,986.9ha to Europeans, 993.2ha to Wallisians, and 279.4ha to communes.⁴²⁹ None the less, dissatisfaction persists in this controversial area. Paul Néaoutyine, the FLNKS President, has berated the ADRAF for perceived slowness in redistributing land,⁴³⁰ although there are reasons for this in many instances. Inter-tribal disputes over land ownership have been described by Bruno Arbouet, an ADRAF director, as an intractable problem.⁴³¹ Arbouet declared that the state approach to land reform, which viewed land as an agricultural commodity, remained out of tune with the tribal perception of land as a source of prestige, which mere ownership rendered valuable.⁴³² The French State prefers that private and public land be ceded to Melanesians for cash cropping. This view is at odds with the tribal perception of land as a source of clan prestige regardless of that land's state of cultivation. Herein lies a major barrier to the spread of commercial agriculture and the lessening of territorial dependence on imported food. The FLNKS ambiguously straddles the two positions. While its member parties have habitually characterised the restitution of alienated land to Melanesian clans as paramount,⁴³³ the Front's pursuit of Kanak economic development through the adoption of European commercial values implies that restituted land should not be allowed to lie fallow but should be cultivated for cash cropping.

The wave of construction undertaken in the North and the Loyalties since 1989 - roads, schools, hospitals, hotels, telecommunications, electrification, port facilities - has encouraged improved integration with, and also increased reliance on, the South Province. The shortage of trained locals capable of contributing in these areas has caused these two provinces to become more reliant on metropolitan French and Nouméan expertise. Néaoutyine has commented ruefully on how the bulk of rural construction work is completed by Nouméan firms, as nearly all the available contractors are based there.⁴³⁴ The

development funds paid to these firms are transferred to the South rather than circulating in the rural economy.

The lack of skilled labour in the North and the Loyalties stems from the low success rate of indigenous Melanesians in the French education system. Disproportionately few Melanesians attain levels of higher education compared to other ethnic groups in New Caledonia. By 1989, a mere 0.5% of indigenous Melanesians had obtained tertiary level education, compared with 10.8% of the local European population, which in itself constitutes a very low figure by metropolitan French standards.⁴³⁵ At that time, indigenous Melanesians represented almost 45% of the New Caledonian population, while Europeans represented just under 34%. (Table 20) The Matignon Accords aim to counteract this inequality through increased funding for all levels of education, and by offering Kanaks greater access to higher education. FLNKS leaders are well aware of this problem and have allocated large portions of their provincial budgets to education.⁴³⁶ A major project set up by the Accords is the 400 managers programme, designed to permit young New Caledonians to receive professional training in metropolitan France. From 1989 to 1991, 75.4% of the young people on this programme were Melanesian.⁴³⁷ By 1998, a total of 400 young people will have been trained under the scheme, but this will mark only the first major step toward integrating Melanesians into management positions. In 1992, Melanesians were under-represented in the upper echelons of the territorial and state public service. There were five Melanesians out of 62 functionaries in the A or highest salary category, 12 out of 125 in category B, and 30 out of 244 in category C.⁴³⁸ The FLNKS has backed the scheme for helping to create the management skills Kanaks will need to further their autonomy. The Melanesians among the 400 managers, who are intended to play a prominent part in territorial development, are being taught French values, skills and techniques. It is uncertain how successful or how willing will they be to integrate tribal values into their careers.

Young Melanesians are being inculcated with French values through the state education system, after unilateral attempts by the FLNKS at formal education have foundered. From February 1985 the FLNKS reacted against the French socialisation of Melanesian youth by setting up independent Kanak Popular Schools. This was to be a territorial network which would teach traditional culture, thus allowing Kanak youth a greater understanding of its heritage. For lack of funds and trained personnel, the schools declined in number to just five by 1992,⁴³⁹ leaving most Kanak children reliant on the French education system.

Within that system, recognition of Melanesian culture has been belated and marginal. Four of New Caledonia's 27 Melanesian languages were offered as subjects for the *baccalauréat* in 1992, although there was a shortage of professional teachers fluent enough to teach and examine these languages.⁴⁴⁰ The Matignon Accords have permitted the Provinces to assume some control of primary education, allowing the North and the Loyalties to promote the use of local languages in primary school curricula, but from secondary level French remains the main language of instruction. In education, as in administration, law, medicine and other fields of professional endeavour, Kanak social advancement under the Matignon Accords lies through the acceptance and mastery of European systems.

In spite of the assertion by Emmanuelli in 1982 that the French Republican ideal of integration belonged to another era,⁴⁴¹ the concept has shown unexpected resilience in becoming an integral part of the Matignon Accords' development programme. Although Socialist Ministers would have been reluctant to admit the point, vocational training efforts since 1988 harked back to another era in teaching young Melanesians French administrative, technical and commercial values far removed from those of their tribal societies.

The language of instruction for the 400 managers is, of course, French. The role of Melanesian languages will undoubtedly remain marginal outside the tribal milieu in years to come, as it has always been. Within the French national education system as a whole, Melanesians will always play a marginal role, due to their lack of numbers. Although efforts are being made to alter national curricula in the territory to account for tribal languages, particularly at primary level, most of the education of young Kanaks will not be much removed from that of their counterparts in metropolitan France. Studying in what is effectively a foreign educational setting has been an historical disadvantage for Melanesians that has yet to be turned around.

Over two centuries of contact with Europeans have caused lasting modifications to traditional Melanesian society in New Caledonia. The European presence forcibly made the tribal milieu aware of broader horizons. The spread of the French language and the acceptance of Christianity there represented two major cultural changes which took place at the same time as Melanesian economic marginalisation caused by French expropriation of tribal domains. The French presence served to broaden the cultural awareness of Melanesians. The introduction of French language coupled with Christianity in the tribal milieu from the nineteenth century assisted the greater consciousness of territorial Melanesian identity. These two European elements provided the starting point for Kanak nationalism by providing a means of intertribal communication and common philosophical ground. Paradoxically, French Republicanism also played an important role in providing other philosophical elements and political tools basic to Kanak nationalism.

In spite of inaccurate and politically motivated conservative French claims that Kanak nationalism was the product of FLNKS contacts with, variously, Anglo-Saxon Protestant, Soviet, Cuban, Vietnamese, North Korean or Libyan activists, the influences of French nationalism and the French Left have had far greater bearing. The majority of indigenous Melanesians first learnt the concepts of 'nation' and 'patrie' in French schools, not from the writings of Marx, Mao, Lenin or Castro.⁴⁴² The first New Caledonian political group which promoted Kanak identity, the Foulards Rouges, was the creation in 1969 of the first young Kanaks to receive tertiary education in metropolitan France. While there, they assimilated the philosophical currents of the French Left in the 1960s, notably its preoccupation with Third World liberation movements, and applied them to their own context.⁴⁴³ The extent to which French political culture has penetrated Kanak nationalist parties is fundamental but tends to be overlooked. The FLNKS reflects the French political milieu in which it exists in having a president, with an executive and all the other structural paraphernalia of European political parties. Congrès Populaire was formed in reaction to this orientation, although it is questionable whether it can transcend the entrenched use of various European political practices by Kanaks.

The confrontation for primacy in New Caledonia between two distinct identities, those of French nationalism and of nascent Kanak nationalism, has been an unequal contest. French nationalism has retained its ascendancy in the territory, and will continue to do so in the near future thanks to the lasting and dominant implantation of French Republican institutions. The preponderant influence of the French State in territorial administration, law, education and language, the strength of state finance, as well as European dominance over the New Caledonian cash economy, have long left Melanesians marginalised in their own homelands. This situation was not fundamentally challenged by the Matignon Accords. The inevitable paradox of the Accords is that while one of their targets is to improve the social, political and economic participation of the Melanesian minority in the implanted French society in New Caledonia, this participation is largely, perhaps inevitably, determined and limited by French criteria. As critics in the LKS and the FULK have pointed out, by cooperating with the French State, the FLNKS has surrendered control over its claim to

independence. As has been demonstrated however, at no point since its foundation had the Front been in a position to attain Kanak sovereignty unilaterally.

Mitterrand has at no time conceded the FLNKS proposition that Kanak identity has moral primacy in New Caledonia. In any case, by signing the Matignon Accords, the Front has to a degree abandoned this claim by cooperating with the RPCR. Mitterrand reaffirmed in his election platform of 1988 the position that the French Republic stood as the ultimate arbiter of the destiny of New Caledonia and that Republican law served in the best interests of Kanaks:

Mais je ne crois pas que l'antériorité historique des Canaques sur cette terre suffise à fonder le droit. [...] Le droit bafoué des Canaques ne sera relevé, restauré que par la paix intérieure et le garant de cette paix et de ces droits ne peut être que la République française. Il n'est pas d'autre arbitre. Je n'énonce pas là un principe, je constate un fait et ce fait commande le salut de tous.⁴⁴⁴

These observations hint at the ultimate limitation of the Socialists since 1981; like more conservative French political parties, while in government they were bound to uphold Republican law. Reforms implemented by Socialist Governments since 1981 have been intended to improve the lot of Kanaks, but constitutional considerations preclude acting against the sovereignty of the Fifth Republic over the islands by promoting Kanak nationalism, let alone by engineering the secession of New Caledonia from France. Under such conditions, the prevailing bias in New Caledonia cannot avoid being in favour of French priorities, however sympathetic Socialist representatives such as Pisani and Rocard might have been to Kanaks.

As the FLNKS itself stated in a petition to the UN in 1991: "the Matignon Accords do not open a clear path to independence and three years after the signing of the agreement what can be seen are only small signs of the things that would enable viable economic, social and cultural conditions for a viable independence".⁴⁴⁵ The potential remains for the FLNKS to protest violently against the territorial *status quo* should Kanaks not receive satisfaction from future governments in Paris. Such protest, as in the past, would ultimately be an unproductive method of gaining sovereignty in the absence of majority territorial backing for independence. Conversely a majority vote against independence in the self-determination referendum scheduled for 1998 may lead Kanak leaders to accept further development funding from the French State. This cooperation might either be the prelude to a patient wait by Kanak politicians for a conjunction of political, electoral and demographic conditions likely to allow a successful push for independence, or might mark the beginning of a definitive Melanesian cultural, political and economic integration into the Fifth Republic.

Notes

¹ Cited in P. Favier & M. Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2. Les épreuves* p.659.

² Ibid. p.660. Pons made this observation about Mitterrand's words to the Council of Ministers in an interview with Favier and Martin-Roland almost three years later, on 25 January 1989. During his time as Minister, Pons openly disagreed with presidential analysis of the New Caledonian situation. For example, he said in February 1987: "Je ne peux pas penser une seconde que le président de la République soit mal informé, ni qu'il me fasse un procès d'intention. Je trouve simplement que son analyse ne correspond pas à la réalité." *Le Monde* 20 février 1987.

³ Compare the pro-Melanesian nationalist bias underlying the use of such words in leftist analyses with the pro-Republican, anti-independence slant of conservative studies. Exemplary of the former are the works of C. Gabriel and V. Kermel: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. La révolte kanake; Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les sentiers de l'espoir*. Exemplary of the latter is ARLR: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie: la stratégie, le droit et la République*.

⁴ For various emotive, heated remarks of this nature by French Deputies, see the National Assembly debate on the declaration of a state of emergency in New Caledonia. *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 24 janvier 1985 pp.2-28; 25 janvier 1985 pp.34-45.

⁵ Georges Faure, an RPR representative, suggested the possibility of a "dérageage de nos institutions vers l'indépendance" should Mitterrand become President, and opposed the rise of "les racistes mendigots des indépendances microscopiques". *Corail* 7 mai 1981.

⁶ "Je ne dis pas pour autant que les Socialistes sont de mauvais Français. Je dis qu'ils seraient contraints, si François Mitterrand était élu, d'accepter, puis de subir *l'insupportable pression, l'intolérable oppression* du Marxisme. Les Mélanésiens, en particulier, doivent en avoir conscience. Le Marxisme, c'est la négation des coutumes, c'est la négation de la religion. Aux travailleurs, je dis même que c'est la négation de leurs libertés syndicales. [...] Le 10 mai, le Marxisme nous menace d'une impulsion décisive, que François Mitterrand le veuille ou non, en véritable otage qu'il est des Communistes." (Original italics.) "La lettre aux Calédoniennes et aux Calédoniens de Jacques Lafleur" in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 7 mai 1981.

⁷ See Jacqueline Sènès: *La vie quotidienne en Nouvelle-Calédonie de 1850 à nos jours* p.292.

⁸ Myriam Dornoy: *Politics in New Caledonia* pp.187-188.

⁹ Of 35 Councillors elected to the Territorial Assembly in 1977, three were PSC representatives. Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.273.

¹⁰ It remained with the FI until the coalition disbanded in 1984. The party then joined the FLNKS under the name PSK.

¹¹ The party was founded after Guy Menesson, Mitterrand's spokesman in New Caledonia during the presidential elections, called for the construction of "la Calédonie socialiste souhaitée par François Mitterrand et nous-mêmes". See *La Presse Calédonienne* 12 mai 1981.

¹² In the first round of the legislative elections in New Caledonia on 14 June 1981, the socialist vote proved to be marginal. In the second constituency, Lafleur was re-elected with a clear majority of 53.33% of the votes cast there. René Orezza, the RCMP candidate, received 3.50% of votes cast. Max Chivot, the PSC candidate (specifically, the candidate of the CPSC rather than of the whole PSC) polled 5.14% of votes cast. The combined percentage totals obtained by Orezza and Chivot were inferior to the percentage gained by Menesson in the constituency in 1978. In the first constituency, the first round was less conclusive as evidence of the exact level of socialist support. This was because the PSC had joined with two other FI parties, LKS and the FULK, to campaign for the LKS leader Nidoish Naisseline. Naisseline gained a combined total of 24.20% of the votes cast in the constituency. The RCMP candidate received 1.07% of the vote. Pidjot, the UC candidate, led the field with 38.75% of the votes cast. As no absolute majority was obtained in the constituency by any candidate, a second round was held on 21 June. Pidjot won with 41.76% of the vote. Naisseline obtained 23.14% of the vote, placed third behind the RPCR candidate.

¹³ PSC efforts to obtain representation in the National Assembly in the French legislative elections of March 1978 were unsuccessful. Guy Menesson, a trade union leader active in the PSC, stood as the PS candidate in New Caledonia's second constituency. This electorate encompassed the west coast of the Grande Terre and Nouméa, where conservative voter support was entrenched. Menesson polled third, gaining 14.2% of votes cast. Lafleur, the successful RPR candidate, received 63.5% of votes cast. Dornoy: *Politics in New Caledonia* pp.187, 255.

¹⁴ The Créteil manifesto is in Mitterrand: *Politique* 2 pp.305-313.

¹⁵ Mitterrand's proposition 58 did mention the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM, but amounted to three broad-ranging sentences mainly touching on the DOM: "58. Pour les peuples de l'outre-mer français qui réclament un véritable changement, ouverture d'une ère de concertation et de dialogue à partir de la reconnaissance de leur identité et de leurs droits à réaliser leurs aspirations. Entre autres, dans les départements d'outre-mer, institution d'un conseil départemental, élu à la proportionnelle et responsable de la vie locale de chaque département avec consultation obligatoire avant tout accord international touchant à la région du monde où ils se trouvent. La loi déposée à ce sujet par le groupe parlementaire socialiste sera soumise au Parlement dès la prochaine session de la législature." Ibid. p.319.

¹⁶ *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 29 avril-5 mai 1993.

¹⁷ Cited in Alain Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* p.176.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Pierre Messmer: "L'indépendance promise à une minorité" in *Le Figaro* 29 mai 1984.

²⁰ "La Nouvelle-Calédonie, colonie de peuplement, bien que vouée à la bigarrure multiraciale, est probablement le dernier territoire tropical non indépendant au monde où un pays développé puisse faire émigrer ses ressortissants.

"Il faut donc saisir cette chance ultime de créer un pays francophone supplémentaire. La présence française en Calédonie ne peut être menacée, sauf guerre mondiale, que par une revendication nationaliste de populations autochtones appuyées par quelques alliés éventuels dans d'autres communautés ethniques venant du Pacifique.

"A court et à moyen terme, l'immigration massive de citoyens français métropolitains ou originaires des départements d'outre-mer (Réunion), devrait permettre d'éviter ce danger, en maintenant et en améliorant le rapport numérique des communautés." "Lettre de Pierre Messmer, Premier Ministre en 1972, à son Secrétaire d'Etat aux DOM-TOM" in Marc Coulon: *L'Irruption kanak: de Calédonie à Kanaky* p.231.

²¹ "Dans l'hypothèse du choix, par un territoire ou un département, d'un statut politique consacrant une rupture totale des liens organiques avec la France, il appartiendra aux autorités compétentes de l'une et l'autre partie de redéfinir les modalités de leurs relations futures." Cited in *Le Monde* 22 octobre 1981.

²² "[...] si les peuples d'outre-mer expriment le souhait d'accéder à l'indépendance, le parti socialiste au pouvoir leur en assurera la possibilité selon les modalités par eux choisies, tout en leur offrant l'établissement de liens avec la France dans le cadre d'une structure mutuellement consentie." Cited in *ibid*.

²³ "Nous avons assez vécu, au cours de ce dernier quart de siècle, les problèmes de la décolonisation pour savoir quels peuvent être le désespoir, puis la colère, de populations qui ne savent plus à qui s'adresser ou bien qui, le sachant, ne trouvent auprès de leur interlocuteur, le gouvernement de la France, ni attention, ni vigilance, ni compréhension. On en arrive donc à la situation de désespoir qui précédera, je peux vous le garantir, une situation d'affrontement. La population canaque, me direz-vous, est ethniquement, aujourd'hui, minoritaire en Nouvelle-Calédonie. C'est possible, mais un tel argument n'est pas suffisant quand on sait comment a été facilitée l'immigration importée à la fois de la métropole et des pays voisins. [...] Nous allons donc nous trouver confrontés à une situation que je vous annonce comme devant être, le cas échéant, extrêmement tendue et peut-être dangereuse. Dans quelle mesure faut-il consentir aux revendications du Front indépendantiste? Vous apprécierez. Nous, en tant que parti socialiste, nous avons déjà pris position." Ibid. 29 septembre 1981. Compare this statement with Franceschi's summary of PS policy vis-à-vis independence in chapter I.

²⁴ "Quant aux territoires d'Outre-Mer, s'ils veulent l'indépendance, comme a dit de Gaulle, qu'ils la prennent." Mitterrand: *Ici et maintenant* p.175.

²⁵ Gabriel Païta, a UC spokesman, commented after the first round "Nous n'avons fait ni propagande, ni réunion publique, nous avons simplement demandé à nos militants de voter en faveur de François Mitterrand". *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 28 avril 1981.

²⁶ Ibid. 8 mai 1981.

²⁷ Alan Clark: "New Caledonia and the new France" in *New Zealand International Review* September/October 1981 p.26.

²⁸ "1° - La restauration de la démocratie économique: la possession de leurs richesses doit être rendue au territoire et à ses travailleurs.[...]

2° - L'instauration de la démocratie: les privilèges et monopoles découlant de la situation coloniale doivent disparaître. [...]

3° - Le rétablissement des libertés: tous les citoyens de Nouvelle-Calédonie doivent retrouver tous leurs droits et toutes leurs libertés dont ils ont été privés." "Lettre de François Mitterrand à Roch Pidjot" in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 8 mai 1981.

29 Ibid. 12 mai 1981.

30 Pidjot asserted misleadingly that "François Mitterrand s'est toujours engagé dans ses déclarations à l'Assemblée Nationale à aider les Calédoniens à accéder à l'indépendance. Il a dit ces paroles lorsqu'il était candidat. Aujourd'hui, c'est le fait d'un Président de la République. L'indépendance est proche. Reste aux habitants à faire valoir leur point de vue à ce sujet." *La Presse Calédonienne* 12 mai 1981.

31 Mauroy led three slightly different administrations from May 1981 to July 1984. The first lasted from 22 May 1981 to 22 June 1981, the second from June 1981 to 22 March 1983, and the third from then until 17 July 1984. For the sake of brevity, in the text they are referred to as the Mauroy Government.

32 The RPCR held 14 of the 36 seats in the Territorial Assembly in 1981. The FNSC held seven seats.

33 The first Melanesians to receive voting rights in New Caledonia, a group that included returned servicemen and tribal chiefs, were enfranchised in 1946, a year after women in metropolitan France. Universal suffrage was accorded to New Caledonian Melanesians in 1951.

34 V. Thompson & R. Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands. French Polynesia and New Caledonia* p.310.

35 The immigration caused by the nickel boom contributed to an ongoing decline in the proportion of indigenous Melanesians to the total territorial population. There were approximately 34,970 indigenous Melanesians in New Caledonia in 1956, just over 51% of the total territorial population (approximately 68,480 inhabitants). By 1963, indigenous Melanesians comprised just over 47% of the territorial population (around 41,190 out of an estimated 86,520 inhabitants). By 1969, that figure had fallen to just under 46% (around 46,200 out of an estimated 100,579 inhabitants). By 1976, the figure was just under 43% (around 55,598 out of an estimated 133,233). See INSEE: *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Principaux résultats du recensement 1989* pp.21-22; Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.97.

36 "Loi no.76-1222 du 28 décembre 1976 relative à l'organisation de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et dépendances" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 29 décembre 1976 pp.7530-7536.

37 See Paul Dijoud: *Un plan de développement économique et social à long terme pour la Nouvelle-Calédonie: le projet de la France en Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.41.

38 Dijoud unexpectedly introduced this idea during a television interview in Nouméa the night before addressing the Territorial Assembly on his plan. See Michael Ovington: "The Impact of the Dijoud Plan on New Caledonian Politics" in M. Spencer, A. Ward & J. Connell (eds.): *New Caledonia. Essays in Nationalism and Dependency* p.117.

39 13 RPCR, five FNSC and two PSC Territorial Councillors voted for the plan. All nine UC Councillors abstained, while six other Councillors were absent. Ibid. p.118. The PSC had not, at that time, adopted its later position of support for independence.

40 New Caledonian GDP was 56,344MF CFP in 1974, including 15,510MF CFP from metallurgy and mining. In 1979, GDP was 81,006MF CFP, including 12,902MF CFP from metallurgy and mining. DTSEE: *Tableaux de l'Economie Calédonienne 1985 (TEC 1985)* p.136. Market instability had caused annual nickel production to fall from a peak of 132,626t in 1974 to 79,994t in 1979. Ibid. p.191.

41 Ibid. p.193.

42 Ibid.

43 See Dijoud: *Un plan de développement...* chs.1-3, 5, 7.

44 Ibid. p.27.

45 Ibid. pp.9, 30-31.

46 Ibid. chs.22, 4, 9-11.

47 Ibid. ch.8.

48 Total exports in 1980 were worth 29,556MF CFP; total imports were worth 35,041MF CFP. In 1981, the respective totals were 33,194MF CFP and 40,435MF CFP. ITSEE: *TEC 1988* p.201.

49 Ovington: "The Impact of the Dijoud Plan on New Caledonian Politics" p.115.

50 By 1981, Paris had raised the annual territorial budget to around 19 billion F CFP. Alain Christnacht: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie, aujourd'hui et demain* p.20.

- 51 Dijoud: *Un plan de développement...* ch.16.
- 52 Ibid. p.89.
- 53 Ibid. p.93.
- 54 Ibid. ch.22.
- 55 Ibid. p.97.
- 56 Alan Ward: "The Independence Movement and the Plan Dijoud in New Caledonia" in *Journal of Pacific History* vol.15 1980 p.198.
- 57 Alain Saussol: "Du front pionnier à la réforme: colonisation et problèmes fonciers en Nouvelle-Calédonie (1853-1985)" in *Cahiers d'outre-mer* juillet-septembre 1986 vol.39 no.155 p.302.
- 58 Dijoud: *Un plan de développement...* p.107.
- 59 Ibid. p.108.
- 60 Alan Ward: *New Caledonia - the Immediate Prospects* p.28.
- 61 Christnacht: *Nouvelle-Calédonie, aujourd'hui et demain* p.16.
- 62 Dijoud: *Un plan de développement...* p.106.
- 63 Christnacht: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.69.
- 64 Cited in Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.202. The land reform statistics available from various authorities appear approximate. Sometimes they differ radically. For instance, the Eighth Plan claimed that tribal lands in New Caledonia totalled around 372,000ha in 1980: Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.57.
- 65 There were few individual Melanesian landowners before the 1970s. It should be noted by way of comparison that in 1981 962 Europeans held 86,620ha in New Caledonia. Cited in Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.199.
- 66 "J'essaierai de resserrer les liens de solidarité qui existent et qui doivent être améliorés. J'essaierai enfin et surtout de bâtir un avenir qui soit conforme à notre espérance, c'est-à-dire un avenir de justice, un avenir de dignité, un avenir de liberté." Cited in *La Presse Calédonienne* 26 mai 1981.
- 67 *Le Monde* 25 mai 1981.
- 68 Exports in 1981 were worth 33,194MF CFP, while imports totalled 40,435MF CFP. In 1982, exports were 27,124MF CFP in value; imports 43,732MF CFP. In 1983, exports were worth 20,843MF CFP, imports 42,202MF CFP. ITSEE: *TEC 1988* p.201.
- 69 Cited in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 12 août 1981.
- 70 See *ibid.* 21 septembre 1981, 26 septembre 1981.
- 71 *Le Monde* 13 août 1981.
- 72 "Le gouvernement choisira la concertation et il ne se verrait acculé à imposer un certain nombre de choses que s'il devait constater que la concertation s'est enlisée." *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 12 août 1981.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 *Le Monde* 13 août 1981.
- 75 Ibid. 22 octobre 1981.
- 76 Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* pp.192-195.
- 77 "As far as self-determination is concerned, I have [...] stated that we [the Mauroy Government] would always respect the will of the people. If I could state there were a majority in New Caledonia today who wanted independence, there would be no problems whatsoever. If independence can be achieved democratically, then we are for it. But this is not the case now." *Sydney Morning Herald* 10 October 1981.
- 78 Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.295.
- 79 *Le Monde* 29 septembre 1981.
- 80 "Art. 38. - Le gouvernement peut, pour l'exécution de son programme, demander au Parlement l'autorisation de prendre par ordonnances, pendant un délai limité, des mesures qui sont normalement du domaine de la loi.
- "Les ordonnances sont prises en Conseil des ministres après avis du Conseil d'Etat. Elles entrent en vigueur dès leur publication mais deviennent caduques si le projet de loi de ratification n'est pas déposé devant le Parlement avant la date fixée par la loi d'habilitation."
- Cited in Nguyen: *La Constitution de la Ve République* p.451.
- 81 21 voted against the proposal (RPCR and FNCS), while 11 pro-independence Councillors voted for it. *Le Monde* 24 décembre 1981.
- 82 "Art. 74 - Les territoires d'outre-mer de la République ont une organisation particulière tenant compte de leurs intérêts propres dans l'ensemble des intérêts de la République. Cette

organisation est définie et modifiée par la loi après consultation de l'assemblée territoriale intéressée." Cited in Nguyen: *La Constitution de la Ve République* p.457.

⁸³ "Je suis persuadé que l'Assemblée territoriale, livrée à elle-même, c'est-à-dire entraîné par ses pesanteurs politiques et les poids des intérêts économiques, n'aurait pu, en dépit des efforts déployés par le haut commissaire, qu'édulcorer les réformes économiques et sociales qui s'imposent." *Le Monde* 16 janvier 1982.

⁸⁴ The Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM and the state representative in Nouméa, the High Commissioner, held considerable powers over the Territorial Assembly: "Le haut-commissaire veille à la légalité des actes des autorités territoriales. Il rend exécutoires, par arrêté, les délibérations de l'assemblée territoriale. [...] Dans un délai de dix jours francs à compter de la date où il en est saisi, le haut-commissaire peut appeler l'assemblée territoriale ou le conseil de gouvernement à se prononcer en seconde lecture sur les délibérations qu'ils ont prises lorsqu'il estime qu'elles ne satisfont pas à l'intérêt général ou à la bonne administration du territoire. [...] Le haut-commissaire peut en outre demander l'annulation, totale ou partielle, prononcée par décret en conseil d'Etat, des délibérations de l'assemblée territoriale ou du conseil de gouvernement pour illégalité, excès de pouvoir, atteinte à la défense nationale, à l'ordre public, au maintien de la sécurité ou aux libertés publiques, si ces délibérations ont été confirmées, en tout ou en partie, en second lecture. La même prérogative appartient au ministre chargé des territoires d'outre-mer. [...]" Article 5. "Loi no.76-1222 du 28 décembre 1976 [...]" in *JO. Lois et décrets*. 20 décembre 1976 p.7531.

⁸⁵ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 23 juillet 1982.

⁸⁶ From November to December 1982 the Opposition took this bill twice to the Constitutional Council. The Council upheld the complaint that a substantial portion of the bill was unconstitutional. See Jacques Chapsal: *La vie politique sous la Ve République 2/1974-1987* p.320; Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* pp.73-78; Derek McDougall: "The French Caribbean during the Mitterrand Era" in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* vol.31 no.3 November 1993 pp.99-100.

⁸⁷ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 15 janvier 1982 p.101.

⁸⁸ "Loi no.82-127 du 4 février 1982 autorisant le Gouvernement, par application de l'article 38 de la Constitution, à promouvoir les réformes nécessitées par la situation en Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 5 février 1982 p.471. The other four ordinances installed advisors on custom law in the local judiciary (Ordinance no.82-877), applied metropolitan French labour laws to the territory (Ordinance no.82-878), ceded administration of electric power to the territory (Ordinance no.82-1115), and reinforced government control over mineral resources (Ordinance no.82-1116).

⁸⁹ "Ordonnance no.82-878 du 15 octobre 1982 relative au développement économique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *ibid.* 17 octobre 1982 p.3107; "Ordonnance no.82-879 du 15 octobre 1982 portant création d'un office culturel, scientifique et technique canaque" in *ibid.* p.3108; "Ordonnance no.82-880 du 15 octobre 1982 relative à l'aménagement foncier, à l'établissement rural et à la reconnaissance des droits coutumiers sur le sol de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et dépendances" in *ibid.* p.3110.

⁹⁰ Henri Emmanuelli: "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *Mondes et cultures* tome 42 no.1 1982. Numéro spécial: Océanie p.8.

⁹¹ Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.299. Here Emmanuelli succeeded where Dijoud had failed. Dijoud's personal income tax proposal had to be abandoned in the face of deadlock in the Territorial Assembly. Taxation was an issue deemed by Paris to be too sensitive to permit an imposed solution.

⁹² Helen Fraser: *New Caledonia. Anti-colonialism in a Pacific Territory* p.14.

⁹³ At the beginning of July 1982, the RPCR tabled a motion for the dissolution of the Territorial Assembly, but this was rejected by the FI/FNSC coalition: *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 juillet 1982.

⁹⁴ See *ibid.* 23 juillet 1982. The MOP was formed in 1979, in direct opposition to rising Kanak militancy. See Wayne McCallum: "*Caldochie*" - *A State of Mind?* p.47.

⁹⁵ Lafleur gained 23,345 of the 27,063 votes cast. His sole opponent, Michel Jaquet, an independent candidate, received 2,192 votes. The turnout for the by-election was low: 27,063 voters out of 50,587 eligible, or 53.50% of the electorate. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6 septembre 1982; *Le Monde* 7 septembre 1982.

⁹⁶ *Pacific Islands Monthly* January 1982 p.13.

⁹⁷ At a UC congress at Sarraméa in November 1982, 24 September 1984 was set as the date for Kanak independence. *Ibid.* January 1983 p.15; Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.306.

- ⁹⁸ See *Le Monde*, 11 janvier 1983, 12 janvier 1983.
- ⁹⁹ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 18 novembre 1983 p.5396.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰¹ Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.102.
- ¹⁰² *Le Monde* 14 avril 1983.
- ¹⁰³ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 mai 1983.
- ¹⁰⁴ "Dans ce choix, qui je le répète, ne saurait de toute évidence être immédiat, la France n'exclut aucune hypothèse, y compris l'indépendance." *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁵ Lafleur employed bitter sarcasm to describe the language employed in the declaration. He described the conference as "un marché de dupes". He chastised Lemoine for trying, by according the FI privileged status, to use the accords as a salve for his Socialist conscience over New Caledonia's colonial history. "En revanche, quelle surprise d'apprendre que nous serions <<acceptés>>, nous, Calédoniens, parce que victimes de l'Histoire! [...] Quel sujet de satisfaction, quelle gloire!" *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 29 juillet 1983.
- ¹⁰⁶ At its convention in Nouméa on 2 October 1982, the RPCR declared itself in favour of New Caledonia receiving greater autonomy. *Ibid.* 4 octobre 1982. Under Giscard d'Estaing, the RPCR had flirted with the idea of New Caledonia becoming a DOM.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jean Lèques, one of the RPCR representatives, commented "Nous avons [...] dit au ministre [Lemoine] que nous ne pouvions accepter un statut qui déboucherait sur l'indépendance; cela nous ne voulons à aucun prix". *Ibid.* 23 juillet 1983.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 30 juillet 1983.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 8 décembre 1983. Original italics.
- ¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* 27 juillet 1983.
- ¹¹¹ Georges Lemoine: "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *Mondes et cultures* tome 44 no.1 1984. Numéro spécial - DOM-TOM p.18.
- ¹¹² *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 29 mai 1984 p.2710.
- ¹¹³ *Le Monde* 24 novembre 1983.
- ¹¹⁴ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 29 mai 1984 p.2712.
- ¹¹⁵ "Loi no.84-821 du 6 septembre 1984 portant statut du territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et dépendances" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 pp.2840-2852.
- ¹¹⁶ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 août 1984 p.4246; *Le Monde* 2 août 1984.
- ¹¹⁷ See *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 29 mai 1984 p.2716
- ¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* pp.2713-2714.
- ¹¹⁹ *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 p.2840.
- ¹²⁰ *L'Avenir Calédonien* 11 avril 1984.
- ¹²¹ *Le Monde* 16 février 1984.
- ¹²² See chapter 4.
- ¹²³ Some of the definitions offered by the Lemoine Statute differ slightly or are more detailed than the statute of 1976, but the two lists do not differ greatly. See *JO. Lois et décrets* 29 décembre 1976 p.7531, 7 septembre 1984 p.2841.
- ¹²⁴ *Ibid.* 7 septembre 1984 p.2841.
- ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁶ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 28 mai 1984 p.2711.
- ¹²⁷ *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 p.2846.
- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.* p.2847.
- ¹²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁰ See *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 29 mai 1984 p.2727, 26 juillet 1984 p.4229.
- ¹³¹ *Le Monde* 30 mai 1984.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*
- ¹³³ "La légitimité du peuple kanak, son droit inné et actif à l'indépendance sont définitivement bafoués par le texte présenté aujourd'hui en troisième lecture.[...] En effet, le peuple kanak, premier occupant du territoire, restera étranger dans son propre pays, car le colonisateur, au travers de ce statut, disposera des droits à l'autodétermination et à l'indépendance du peuple colonisé." *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 1er août 1984 p.4229.
- ¹³⁴ *Le Monde* 13 juin 1984. Pidjot had joined the Socialist group after the elections of 1981.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 31 juillet 1984.

- 136 FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS. Les motions de tous les congrès. Les décisions du gouvernement provisoire de Kanaky* p.6.
- 137 Ibid. pp.6-7.
- 138 61,870 people out of a total of 145,368 inhabitants. INSEE: *Territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et Dépendances. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 avril 1983* p.61.
- 139 Ibid. p.62.
- 140 J.-M. Tjibaou & P. Missotte: *Kanaké the Melanesian Way* pp.117-118.
- 141 Fraser: *New Caledonia: anti-colonialism in a Pacific territory* p.21. Another group of 19 Kanak activists spent several weeks in Libya almost three years later, but did so without the approval of the FLNKS executive.
- 142 At its foundation, members included the UC, Palika, FULK, UPM and the PSK. The pressure groups were the Comité Pierre Declercq, and the Groupe des femmes kanakes et exploitées en lutte. The sole trade union member was the USTKE.
- 143 *Le Monde* 3 octobre 1985.
- 144 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 17 octobre 1984.
- 145 *Le Monde* 25-26 novembre 1984.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 5 décembre 1984 p.6601.
- 148 Ibid. p.6600.
- 149 See *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 20 novembre 1984.
- 150 *Le Monde* 24 novembre 1984; "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" 24 novembre 1984 in *BIPA* white file 851054202.
- 151 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 20 novembre 1984, 21 novembre 1984, 22 novembre 1984; *Le Monde* 20 novembre 1984, 24 novembre 1984, 29 novembre 1984.
- 152 FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS* p.4; *Le Monde* 30 novembre 1984, 1er décembre 1984.
- 153 Pisani later admitted "à la date de ma nomination, j'ignorais tout du territoire". Edgard Pisani: *Persiste et signe* p.307.
- 154 Ibid. pp.312-313.
- 155 See B. Droz & E. Lever: *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962* p.66.
- 156 Pisani: *Persiste et signe* p.359.
- 157 Ibid. p.332.
- 158 For published examples of conservative New Caledonian vitriolic comments on Pisani, see Isabelle Doisy: *Chroniques des années de cendres. Nouvelle-Calédonie 1984-1986*; B. Sylvano & R. Renneteau: *Une épine dans le Caillou*; Bernard Lacourrège: *Les heures noires de la Calédonie: récit chronologique et critique*.
- 159 "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" 12 décembre 1984 in *BIPA* white file 851062301.
- 160 Droz & Lever: *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962* pp.62-63.
- 161 See Alan Clark: "Mitterrand, Matignon and the Role of the Republican State in New Caledonia" in R. Aldrich (ed.): *France, Oceania and Australia: past and present* pp.137-142.
- 162 *Le Monde* 7 décembre 1984.
- 163 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 12 décembre 1984 p.6854.
- 164 Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* p.217.
- 165 Pisani: *Persiste et signe* pp.328-329.
- 166 Maurice Satineau: *Le miroir de Nouméa. La classe politique française face à la crise calédonienne* chs.5, 6.
- 167 The other signatories were Jacques Chirac, Pierre Messmer, Raymond Barre, Maurice Couve de Murville, Jacques Chaban-Delmas and Michel Debré.
- 168 The statement declared of any proposed self-determination: "Elle ne peut faire l'objet de manipulations électorales. C'est l'ensemble des citoyens français habitant la Nouvelle-Calédonie qui doivent être appelés à se prononcer sur le statut de la terre où ils vivent". Cited in *Le Monde* 23-24 décembre 1984.
- 169 "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" 16 décembre 1984 in *BIPA* white file 851083102.
- 170 Pisani noted that the RPCR was intransigently opposed to dialogue with him. Pisani: *Persiste et signe* p.328.
- 171 *Le Monde* 28 décembre 1984.
- 172 *Le Point* 19 décembre 1988.
- 173 Cited in full in *Le Monde* 8 January 1985.

- 174 Pidjot's words. *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 22 novembre 1984 p.6613.
- 175 Pisani: *Persiste et signe* p.325.
- 176 "Le suffrage peut être direct ou indirect dans les conditions prévues par la Constitution. Il est toujours universel, égal et secret." Cited in Nguyen: *La Constitution de la Ve République* p.445.
- 177 *Le Monde* 8 janvier 1985.
- 178 See Pidjot in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 21 août 1985 p.2529.
- 179 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 11 janvier 1985.
- 180 Droz & Lever: *Histoire de la guerre d'Algérie 1954-1962* p.328.
- 181 For the official statements of the parties concerned, see *Le Monde* 15 janvier 1985, 16 janvier 1985.
- 182 For a detailed account of this thesis, see René Guiart: "La vie et la mort d'un héros kanak: Eloi Machoro" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* no.92/93 année 1991 1 & 2 pp.129-139.
- 183 Pisani: *Persiste et signe* pp.340-342.
- 184 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 14 janvier 1985.
- 185 The decree and Pisani's accompanying announcement are in *ibid.*
- 186 *Le Figaro* 19 janvier 1985.
- 187 *Le Monde* 6 février 1985.
- 188 *Ibid.* 26 mars 1985.
- 189 Pisani was still hoping for a return to predominance of moderate political views in New Caledonia in June. *Ibid.* 14 juin 1985.
- 190 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.291.
- 191 *Le Monde* 22 janvier 1985.
- 192 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.293.
- 193 *Ibid.* pp.293-294.
- 194 *Le Monde* 26 avril 1985.
- 195 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.296
- 196 Pisani: *Persiste et signe* p.356.
- 197 "Loi no.85-892 du 23 août 1985 sur l'évolution de la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 24 août 1985 pp.9775-9778.
- 198 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 mai 1985 p.1278.
- 199 *Le Monde* 10 août 1985.
- 200 FLNKS: Motion 1. "Motions de 3e congrès du FLNKS à Hienghène" in *La charte du FLNKS* p.16.
- 201 *Ibid.*
- 202 Alan Clark: "Conflict Formal and Informal; elections in New Caledonia, 1984-1986" in *Pacific Studies* vol.10 no.3 July 1987 p.93.
- 203 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 1 octobre 1985.
- 204 A Melanesian loyalist party.
- 205 Lafleur maintained this position before the National Assembly in May 1985. *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 mai 1985 p.1296.
- 206 New Caledonia's coverage of the value of imports by exports climbed from 55.7% in 1983 to 92.3% in 1985, but this figure dropped to 40.7% in 1986. ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.207. Cf. Table 6.
- 207 John Connell: "'Trouble in Paradise': the perception of New Caledonia in the Australian press" in *Australian Geographical Studies* vol.25 no.2 October 1987 p.60.
- 208 Between November 1984 and February 1985, property damage in New Caledonia was estimated at 1775.3MF CFP. Of this amount, 2.8MF CFP occurred in Nouméa. Cited in Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.343.
- 209 By 1985, territorial agricultural production had declined to 57% in constant value of the total in 1974. There was none the less an increase in value over each year since 1981. Agricultural production equalled 99% of the total value in 1974. This fell to 45% in 1981, then climbed to 51% in 1982, 54% in 1983, and dropped to 53% in 1984. ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.133.
- 210 "[...] aujourd'hui, de nouveau, l'outre-mer occupe dans le projet politique national la place qu'il n'aurait jamais dû perdre. Témoignages de rayonnement français à travers le monde, vitrines de notre science et de notre industrie dans le Pacifique, l'océan Indien et dans l'ouest de

l'océan Atlantique, atout essentiel de la France dans le monde spatial de demain, nos territoires, départements et collectivités d'outre-mer constituent désormais une préoccupation prioritaire du Gouvernement [...]" *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 juillet 1986 p.2930.

211 See "Discours de M. J. Chirac, Nouméa, le 25 septembre 1985". (Photocopied speech notes.)

212 Chaban-Delmas held this theory. *Le Monde* 13-14 janvier 1985.

213 Cited in *ibid.* 4 décembre 1984.

214 Toubon and Chirac announced at La Foa in September 1985 that, should the RPR be in government from 1986, they would organise a referendum. *Ibid.* 15-16 septembre 1985.

215 Mitterrand: *Ici et maintenant* p.175.

216 *Le Monde* 12 novembre 1981.

217 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 24 janvier 1985 p.3.

218 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats du Sénat* 4 juin 1986 p.1347.

219 Around 20% of indigenous Melanesians did not vote for Kanak nationalist parties in the regional elections of 1985. *Le Monde* 3 octobre 1985.

220 An FLNKS delegation, including Yeiwené, met PC leaders in Paris on 7 May 1986. After the meeting Maxime Gremetz, a member of the Communist political bureau, reiterated the solidarity of the PC with the Kanak people. *Ibid.* 15 mai 1986.

221 *Ibid.* 4 décembre 1984.

222 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 24 janvier 1985 p.3.

223 *Ibid.*

224 *Libération* 4-6 janvier 1985.

225 Rosalène Dousset-Leenhardt: *Terre natale. Terre d'exil* p.168; Antonio Raluy: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.85.

226 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 29 avril 1988, 2 mai 1988.

227 *Le Monde* 8 décembre 1984.

228 *Ibid.* 1er décembre 1984.

229 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 21 novembre 1984 p.6227.

230 In 1985, the combined strengths of the army and gendarme units present in New Caledonia totalled around 5,000 troops. By the end of 1987, this figure had risen to an estimated 8,000. Nic Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the Pacific" in *Interdisciplinary Peace Research* vol.2 no.1 1990 pp.5-7.

231 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2. Les épreuves* p.660.

232 For example Michel Debré, an RPR Deputy and former Prime Minister, declared that Australia coveted the territory and talked of the likelihood of "une nouvelle colonisation" in France's absence. *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 1er août 1984 p.4244.

233 *Ibid.* 10 mai 1984 p.2160.

234 Pisani observed this, among others. See *Persiste et signe* p.335.

235 He declared: "Je lance [...] un appel à une véritable ouverture, à la tolérance générale, et au dialogue. J'invite toutes les parties prenantes à accepter ce dialogue. Je lance cet appel à tous les hommes et à toutes les femmes de bonne volonté, quel que soit [...] le camp auquel ils appartiennent [...] pour essayer de mettre en place ce qui deviendra, je l'espère, le statut définitif de la Nouvelle-Calédonie de demain, dans la paix et dans la fraternité retrouvée." *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 juillet 1986 p.2972.

236 *Le Monde* 10 mai 1986.

237 *Ibid.* 19 juin 1986.

238 FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS* p.28.

239 *Le Monde* 11 décembre 1986, 12 décembre 1986, 13 décembre 1986.

240 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.662.

241 *Le Monde* 31 janvier 1987.

242 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.662.

243 FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS* p.44.

244 *Ibid.* p.32; *Le Monde* 20 mai 1987.

245 *Le Monde* 30 janvier 1987.

246 *Ibid.* 8-9 février 1987, 28 août 1987.

247 For example see *ibid.* 8-9 février 1987, 18 février 1987, 19 février 1987, 20 février 1987, 5-6 avril 1987, 27 août 1987, 28 août 1987.

- 248 Ibid. 8 août 1987.
- 249 Ibid. 23-24 août 1987; *Le Point* 4 septembre 1987.
- 250 *Le Monde*. 25 août 1987, 26 août 1987.
- 251 Ibid. 27 août 1987.
- 252 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 14 septembre 1987; *Le Monde* 15 septembre 1987.
- 253 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 14 septembre 1987, 15 septembre 1987; *Le Monde* 18 septembre 1987.
- 254 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 septembre 1987.
- 255 *Le Monde* 11 février 1987.
- 256 In July that year, he described the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute as "fondé sur l'ambiguïté, élaboré au seul profit d'une petite minorité [indépendantiste], mais contesté par tous." *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 juillet 1986 p.2930.
- 257 Ibid. p.2931.
- 258 "Loi no.86-844 du 17 juillet 1986 relative à la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 19 juillet 1986 pp.8927-8931.
- 259 Here he continued work already started by the preceding Government. See the indemnity funds established by Pisani: "Ordonnance no.85-1180 du 13 novembre 1985 relative aux mesures destinées à remédier aux conséquences pour les personnes et pour les biens des événements survenus en Nouvelle-Calédonie depuis le 29 octobre 1984" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 15 novembre 1985 p.13226.
- 260 Daniel Dommel: *La crise calédonienne. Rémission ou guérison?* p.88.
- 261 For details, see *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 avril 1987 p.225.
- 262 Figure given by Pons in *ibid.* Pons allocated 280MFF worth of additional payments in August 1987, just before the self-determination referendum. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 3 août 1987.
- 263 The price of a pound of nickel rose from just under \$US2 in January 1986 to just over \$US8 by April 1988. See INSEE: *TEC 1991* p.169.
- 264 There were claims that this funding was dispensed largely to the exclusion of the FLNKS-controlled regions: Fraser: *New Caledonia. Anti-colonialism in a Pacific Territory* p.44; *L'Avenir Calédonien* février 1987. According to the IEOM by 31 December 1988, 298.37MFF had been dispensed from the exceptional aid and development fund, 21.74MFF (7.29%) had been distributed to tribes, 30.6MFF (10.25%) to tourism, 100.57MFF (33.71%) to communes, 49.06MFF (16.44%) to regions, and 96.4MFF (32.31%) was allocated to sundry other undetailed projects. IEOM: *Exercice 1988. Rapport d'activité. Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.93.
- 265 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 avril 1987 pp.225-226.
- 266 See "Un budget bidon" in *L'Avenir Calédonien* septembre 1985 pp.2-3; "Lettre des trois présidents FLNKS à Jacques Chirac" in *ibid.* février 1987 p.2.
- 267 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 avril 1987 p.226.
- 268 Dommel: *La crise calédonienne. Rémission ou guérison?* p.90.
- 269 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 avril 1987 p.225.
- 270 See *L'Avenir Calédonien* 12 mars 1987.
- 271 See *Le Monde* 12 septembre 1987.
- 272 Ibid. 22 septembre 1989.
- 273 See *ibid.* 12 septembre 1987, 22 septembre 1989.
- 274 "Loi no.88-82 du 22 janvier 1988 portant statut du territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 26 janvier 1988 p. 1231.
- 275 Ibid. p. 1233.
- 276 Pierre Joxe, a PS Deputy, stated "Pourquoi légiférons-nous en règle générale? Pour que les lois de droit pénal, de droit civil, de droit fiscal, de droit public, de droit administratif entrent en application. Il est rare qu'un projet de loi soit soumis à discussion alors que chacun sait que son application est plus qu'hypothétique et qu'elle est, en tout cas, suspendue à un autre événement politique; l'élection présidentielle". *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 24 novembre 1987 p.6276.
- 277 Jean-Claude Martinez, an FN Deputy, went so far as to declare to Pons: "Vous démissionnez devant l'idéologie indépendantiste régionaliste. [...] Vous leur offrez [les indépendantistes] deux régions sur quatre. Vous leur réservez des bastions. Vous leur accordez des subventions, des possibilités d'emprunt. Vous leur affectez des impôts. Vous leur financez leur sécession." Ibid. 24 novembre 1987 p.6307.

- 278 The FN wanted centralisation not only for New Caledonia but for all three Pacific TOM. Martinez said: "Les bonnes solutions institutionnelles seraient très simples. L'autonomie? La régionalisation? Ce n'est pas cela qu'il fallait faire. Une double intégration était nécessaire. Il fallait intégrer la Nouvelle-Calédonie à la France métropolitaine - et il fallait intégrer le Pacifique français." Ibid p.6309.
- 279 See *Le Monde* 30 décembre 1987, 21 janvier 1988.
- 280 Compare *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 pp.2840-2841 with ibid. 26 janvier 1988 pp.1231-1232.
- 281 Ibid.
- 282 *Le Monde* 27 avril 1988.
- 283 The FLNKS, the PS, and the FN objected to this decision. Ibid. 28 janvier 1988.
- 284 For an overview of various incidents, see *Le Point* 29 février 1988; *Bwenando* 18 mars 1988 pp.6-13; *Le Monde* 23 décembre 1987, 23 février 1988, 24 février 1988, 13-14 mars 1988.
- 285 *L'Avenir Calédonien* 8 août 1984; *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 4 décembre 1984 p.6613, 5 novembre 1985 p.3943.
- 286 See Lionel Duroy: *Hienghène, le désespoir calédonien* ch.3; Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* pp.245-249.
- 287 Fraser: *New Caledonia. Anti-colonialism in a Pacific Territory* p.51.
- 288 Tjibaou wrote an open letter to Mitterrand in March 1988 expressing the hope that the presidential candidate would be re-elected: "J'espère que vous pourrez revenir en force à la tête de l'Etat pour offrir à notre peuple [le peuple kanak], et à la France, bien sûr, une nouvelle ère de liberté." Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* p.251; *Le Monde* 2 avril 1988.
- 289 *Le Monde* 25 février 1988, 29 mars 1988.
- 290 Gabriel & Kermel: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les sentiers de l'espoir* p.144.
- 291 Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* p.252; *Le Monde* 23 février 1988.
- 292 *Pacific Islands Monthly* June 1988 p.8.
- 293 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 mai 1988.
- 294 Rollat: *Tjibaou le Kanak* pp.252-253, 261.
- 295 Accounts of the Fayaoué raid and the events that followed are to be found in Patrick Forestier: *Les mystères d'Ouvéa*; Philippe Legorjus: *La morale et l'action*; Gilbert Picard: *L'affaire d'Ouvéa*; and F. Plenel & A. Rollat: *Mourir à Ouvéa. Le tournant calédonien*.
- 296 Gabriel & Kermel: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les sentiers de l'espoir* p.159.
- 297 Rollat: *Tjibaou le kanak* p.253.
- 298 Cited in Gabriel & Kermel: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les sentiers de l'espoir* p.149.
- 299 *Le Monde* 24-25 avril 1988.
- 300 Plenel & Rollat: *Mourir à Ouvéa* p.9.
- 301 *Le Monde* 6 mai 1988.
- 302 See Pons's comments in ibid., and Chirac's statement in ibid. 7 mai 1988.
- 303 Ibid. 4 mai 1988.
- 304 The Government declared at the time that no irregularities were involved in their deaths. Legorjus contradicted this declaration in his autobiography. While denying any GIGN involvement, he wrote that parties unknown probably took Lavelloi into the bush and shot him. Amossa was supposedly shot by an unnamed gendarme for having tried to escape. Legorjus doubted this explanation, believing neither that Amossa was trying to escape, nor that his killer thought he was escaping at the time. Legorjus described Dianou's death, and probably Wamo's also, as the result of their captors' conscious decision to leave them to die from untreated wounds. Legorjus: *La morale et l'action* pp.286-287.
- 305 Ibid. pp.242-243; Forestier: *Les mystères d'Ouvéa* pp.101, 200.
- 306 Legorjus: *La morale et l'action* p.258.
- 307 Mitterrand stated in 1989 that he had assented to the operation because he believed the lives of the hostages were in danger. Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.747. He discounted the theory that the assault would seriously affect the result of the second round of the presidential elections. Concerning the incident, which took place at the same time as Chirac announced the release of French hostages in Lebanon, and the return of the French agent Dominique Prieur from internment at Hao Atoll, Mitterrand commented in 1989: "Les otages du Liban, Ouvéa et en prime Mme Prieur: Chirac avait un peu chargé la barque. Cette fantasia m'a peut-être coûté un demi-point le 8 mai." Ibid. p.749.

- ³⁰⁸ *Le Monde* 1er juin 1988, 23 juillet 1988. The official inquiry into the matter did not result in prosecutions because of the amnesty on political crimes declared under the Matignon Accords. Dommel: *La crise calédonienne. Rémission ou guérison?* pp.113-114.
- ³⁰⁹ This total included riot police, gendarmes and regular army troops in New Caledonia but omitted the 150 members of the Nouméa municipal police. *Damoclès* no.32 avril/mai 1988 p.8.
- ³¹⁰ Gabriel & Kermel: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les sentiers de l'espoir* p.152.
- ³¹¹ *Ibid.* p.153.
- ³¹² *Le Point* 4 juillet 1988.
- ³¹³ At this time, both Tjibaou and Lafleur declared themselves amenable to a partition of New Caledonia, a notion which was soon abandoned. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6 juin 1988; *Le Monde* 4 juin 1988.
- ³¹⁴ See Rocard's assessment of New Caledonia's importance in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 juin 1988 p.359; Michel Rocard: *Un pays comme le nôtre. Textes politiques 1986-1989* p.63.
- ³¹⁵ *Le Monde* 20 mai 1988. Stirn had held the post of Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM under Giscard d'Estaing. Dijoud's predecessor in the post, Stirn was responsible for implementing statute reforms in 1976. By the 1980s Stirn was an independent Deputy in the National Assembly, whose sympathies lay closer to Socialist positions on New Caledonia than to those of the UDF or the RPR.
- ³¹⁶ *Ibid.* 12 mai 1988.
- ³¹⁷ Michel Rocard: *Le cœur à l'ouvrage* p.289.
- ³¹⁸ *Le Monde* 15-16 mai 1988.
- ³¹⁹ *Ibid.* 25 juin 1988.
- ³²⁰ For the text of the Matignon Accord, see Plenel & Rollat: *Mourir à Ouvéa* pp.251-257.
- ³²¹ For the text of the Oudinot Accord, see *ibid.* pp.257-268.
- ³²² *Ibid.* p.253.
- ³²³ The RPCR gained 35 seats, the FN gained eight, the extreme right FC gained two, and Entente, a minority right-wing coalition, gained one. Union Pour Construire, formed by dissident Kanak nationalists who opposed boycotting the elections, won two seats. *Le Monde* 26 avril 1988.
- ³²⁴ *Ibid.* 14 juin 1988.
- ³²⁵ This was the seventh referendum to be held under the Fifth Republic. The lowest preceding turnout for a national referendum was on 23 April 1972, when 60.25% of eligible voters participated in a referendum on enlarging the EEC. *Libération* 6 novembre 1988.
- ³²⁶ "Loi no.88-1028 du 9 novembre 1988 portant dispositions statutaires et préparatoires à l'autodétermination de la Nouvelle-Calédonie en 1998" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 10 novembre 1988 p.14087.
- ³²⁷ *Le Monde* 8 novembre 1988.
- ³²⁸ Dommel: *La crise calédonienne. Rémission ou guérison?* p.26.
- ³²⁹ Article 2 of the final text of the Matignon Accords in Law no.88-1028 stipulated: "Entre 1er mars et le 31 décembre 1998, les populations intéressées de la Nouvelle-Calédonie seront appelées à se prononcer par un scrutin d'autodétermination, conformément aux dispositions de l'article 53 de la Constitution, sur le maintien du territoire dans la République ou sur son accession à l'indépendance. [...] Seront admis à participer à ce scrutin les électeurs inscrits sur les listes électorales du territoire à la date du référendum approuvant la présente loi. Sont réputées avoir domicile dans le territoire, alors même qu'elles accomplissent le service national ou poursuivent un cycle d'études ou de formation continue hors du territoire, les personnes qui avaient antérieurement leur domicile dans le territoire." Unless stated otherwise, the articles referred to here and below are those of Law no.88-1028, which codified the Matignon Accords.
- ³³⁰ L. Arréghini & P. Waniez: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie au tournant des années 1990. Un état des lieux* pp.31-33.
- ³³¹ 17,241 of the 50,524 votes cast. Alan Clark: "Autonomy, Integration, Development: elections in New Caledonia" in *Political Science* vol.35, no.1 July 1983 p.25.
- ³³² Haut-Commissariat de la République en Nouvelle-Calédonie: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Accords de Matignon. Bilan 1991. Le chemin parcouru* p.33.
- ³³³ The FLNKS congress at Gossanah, on Ouvéa on 24 July 1988 had formulated this proposal, cited in Commission d'enquête indépendante sur la situation en Nouvelle-Calédonie: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords de Matignon* p.27.

- 334 "Loi no.90-33 du 10 janvier 1990 portant amnestie d'infractions commises à l'occasion d'événements survenus en Nouvelle-Calédonie": *L'année politique économique et sociale en France 1990* p.169. For details about the approval of the law, see *Le Monde* 25 novembre 1989, 22-23 septembre 1991, *Libération* 29 novembre 1989.
- 335 See his speech to the New Caledonian Consultative Committee in Nouméa on 26 August 1988 in Rocard: *Un pays comme le nôtre* pp.66-71.
- 336 Mitterrand stated in his *Lettre à tous les Français* in April 1988 that: "Il n'y avait pas de bachelier canaque jusqu'en 1962. Il y a peu de médecins ou d'ingénieurs canaques, trente-six instituteurs sur plus de huit cents, six fonctionnaires de rang élevé sur près de mille. [...] Je veux dire par là que si l'ultime chance de la Nouvelle-Calédonie de vivre en paix et des Canaques d'être entendus tient de la République, la République doit être juste." Cited in Plenel & Rollat: *Mourir à Ouvéa* p.251.
- 337 For further details on the ADRAF investigation, see *Le Monde* 28 septembre 1988, 26 juillet 1989, 27 juillet 1989, 27 juillet 1989; Commission d'enquête: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords de Matignon* pp.58-60.
- 338 *Le Monde* 16 juillet 1988.
- 339 Anne Tristan: *L'autre monde. Un passage en Kanaky* p.33; *Le Monde* 19 juillet 1988.
- 340 For an eye-witness account of this congress, see Tristan: *L'autre monde* pp.49-57.
- 341 Cited in Commission d'enquête: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords de Matignon* pp.26-32.
- 342 *Le Monde* 21-22 août 1988.
- 343 *Ibid.* 17 août 1988.
- 344 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 5 mai 1989, 6-7 mai 1989.
- 345 For a detailed description of the differences between Ouvéan FLNKS members and Front leaders on the Grande Terre, see Tristan: *L'autre monde* pp.183-288.
- 346 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6-7 mai 1989, 9 mai 1989.
- 347 *Pacific News Bulletin* June 1989 p.3.
- 348 *Ibid.*
- 349 *Ibid.* July 1989 p.5.
- 350 *Ibid.* August 1989 p.6.
- 351 *Ibid.* February 1990 pp.7-8.
- 352 *Le Monde* 29 janvier 1992.
- 353 *Pacific News Bulletin* October 1992 pp.4-5, December 1992 p.9.
- 354 *Pacific Report* 6 July 1989.
- 355 *Le Monde* 12 avril 1991.
- 356 *Pacific Report* 3 August 1989; *Pacific News Bulletin* August 1989 p.6.
- 357 *Pacific News Bulletin* July 1989 p.5.
- 358 Louis Uregei stated in 1989: "USTKE signed the Matignon Accords last year and continues to support the measures within the accords (training Kanaks, building infrastructure, developing a new economy, a new division of economic power, social/health/education benefits) but not necessarily the way they are being put into application by the people in the provinces." (Original italics.) *Ibid.* December 1989 p.4.
- 359 *Ibid.* January 1993 p.11.
- 360 *Le Monde* 24-25 juillet 1988.
- 361 *Ibid.* 8 novembre 1988.
- 362 The PC resolved in favour of the Matignon Accords. The communiqué of its central committee, issued on 9 September 1988, declared: "Le FLNKS estime que cet accord est susceptible «de reconstruire le pays (kanak) dans la perspective de l'indépendance». Le Parti communiste français, respectant l'opinion du FLNKS et sa volonté de pouvoir s'engager dans cette voie, ne saurait que contribuer à ce qu'une réponse positive soit apportée par notre peuple à ce souhait." Cited in *L'Humanité* 10 septembre 1988. The UDF supported the Matignon Accords for their creation of a consensual solution in New Caledonia. *Le Monde* 18 juin 1988, 25 octobre 1988.
- 363 *Le Monde* 18 juin 1988, 4-5 septembre 1988, 20 octobre 1988.
- 364 See Lafleur's comments to this effect in *ibid.* 29 juin 1988.
- 365 See the comments of Pierre Maresca, the RPCR Secretary-General, in *ibid.* 18 octobre 1988.
- 366 *Ibid.* 30 avril 1991.

- 367 See *ibid.* 11 juin 1991; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 31 août 1992, 1er septembre 1992.
- 368 *Le Monde* 6 juillet 1988.
- 369 The journalist Alain Rollat commented wryly on the spectacle of Tjibaou and Chirac shaking hands, when six months before they had applied respectively the epithets "facho" and "terroriste" to one another. *Ibid.* 8 octobre 1988.
- 370 *Ibid.* 16-17 octobre 1988, 18 octobre 1988.
- 371 *Ibid.* 18 octobre 1988.
- 372 *Ibid.* 8 novembre 1988.
- 373 *Ibid.* 18 octobre 1988.
- 374 *Ibid.* 4 février 1993.
- 375 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 27 juin 1991.
- 376 Meeting at the French Department, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, on 27 November 1992.
- 377 On 14 June Perben declared to the Territorial Congress: "Oui, le gouvernement est décidé à poursuivre sans ambiguïté sur la voie tracée par les accords de Matignon. Oui, le gouvernement remplira sa mission d'arbitrage et assurera le maintien de la paix civile. Oui, le gouvernement favorisera le dialogue entre tous les partenaires. Oui, le gouvernement poursuivra le rééquilibrage entre les provinces..." *Libération* 18 juin 1993.
- 378 *Le Monde* 23 mai 1991.
- 379 *Ibid.* 20-21 octobre 1991, 18 avril 1992.
- 380 Mitterrand stated this after the mid-term assessment meeting for the Matignon Accords, held in Paris from 2 to 4 February 1993. *Ibid.* 6 février 1993.
- 381 *Libération* 29 juillet 1988.
- 382 *Le Point* 14 novembre 1988.
- 383 *Le Monde* 3 octobre 1985.
- 384 Motions of the FLNKS Gossanah congress, 24 July 1988 cited in Commission d'enquête: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords Matignon* p.30.
- 385 The FLNKS has had some success in this area. The Wallisian UO is open to New Caledonian independence should it serve to improve the situation of Wallisians in New Caledonia: *Pacific Report* 8 November 1990. In 1990 Michel Héma, the UO President, was employed on the staff of Rock Wamytan, the FLNKS Vice-President: *ibid.* However, the UO gained only 2,424 votes in the 1989 provincial elections. (Table 18) Such a level of support will be insufficient in itself to tip the electoral balance in 1998.
- 386 The acceptance by the FLNKS of the Pisani/Fabius Statute in 1985 was motivated by the same thinking. See FLNKS, *La charte du FLNKS* pp.16-17.
- 387 Anon.: "Le Centre Culturel Kanak de Nouméa" in *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* octobre 1991 pp.9-13.
- 388 Haut-Commissariat: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les accords de Matignon* p.32.
- 389 ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.170.
- 390 Bernard Brou: *Richesses minières en Nouvelle-Calédonie*.
- 391 See, for example, Alban Bensa: *Nouvelle-Calédonie: un paradis dans la tourmente* pp.123-124; Jean-Paul Besset: *Le dossier calédonien: les enjeux de l'après-référendum* pp.33-37; Commission d'enquête: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords Matignon* pp.44-47; Susanne Ounei-Small: "Kanak: the 'peace' signed with our blood" in D. Robie (ed.): *Tu Galala: social change in the Pacific* pp.163-179.
- 392 Aid per capita in New Caledonia in 1987 was estimated at \$US1,592, coming fourth after aid to Niue (\$US1,666), French Polynesia (\$US1,742), and Tokelau (\$US2,000). The lowest figure in the South Pacific islands was \$0 for Nauru, followed by \$US75 for Fiji. Donna Winslow: *Petition to the Fourth Committee concerning New Caledonia* p.10.
- 393 Of the TOM in 1990, New Caledonia, with a 53.4% coverage rate of imports by export payments, led French Polynesia, with a 12.0% coverage rate. Martinique, the most export-orientated of the DOM, had a coverage rate of 15.8%. ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.207.
- 394 *Le Monde* 10 septembre 1992.
- 395 ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.207.
- 396 *Ibid.* p.121.
- 397 Mining and metallurgy were worth 14,472MF CFP in 1980. GDP that year was 90,848MF CFP. In 1988, they represented 51,796MF CFP of 224,496MF CFP. *Ibid.*
- 398 Administration was worth 20,447MF CFP of total territorial GDP of 90,848MF CFP in 1980 and 53,861MF CFP of 224,496MF CFP in 1988. *Ibid.*

- 399 Agricultural production was worth 2,719MF CFP in 1980. In 1988, it totalled 3,575MF CFP. Ibid.
- 400 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.73.
- 401 Ibid. p.74.
- 402 Haut-Commissariat: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les accords de Matignon* p.39.
- 403 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 3 septembre 1992.
- 404 The number of Japanese tourists visiting New Caledonia rose from 15,885 in 1987 to 25,276 in 1991. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.51.
- 405 Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.145.
- 406 Ibid.
- 407 DTSEE: *TEC 1985* pp.178-179.
- 408 ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.164.
- 409 Ibid.
- 410 Prawn production rose from 54.7t in 1984 to 538.6t in 1990. In 1991, total production was 648.5t. Of the 1990 total, 260t were exported. 371.9t were exported the following year, at a value of 1,121F CFP per kg. DTSEE: *TEC 1985* p.181; ITSEE: *TEC 1991* p.167; IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Nouvelle-Calédonie* pp.91-92.
- 411 The FLNKS Constitution refers to "le peuple kanak" as one and indissoluble; "une communauté nationale, libre, unie et souveraine"; FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS* p.46. Cf. various direct or implicit references to "the Kanak people" in Susanna Ounei: *For Kanak Independence. The Fight against French Rule in New Caledonia*; and D. Robie: *Blood on their Banner* chs. 4-7, 15.
- 412 See part 2, ch.2 "Quel développement?: les réponses des responsables politiques kanak" in Leblic: *Les Kanak face au développement. La voie étroite* pp.190-251.
- 413 *Le Monde* 26 janvier 1993.
- 414 Donna Winslow: "Sustainable Development in New Caledonia" in *Pacific Affairs* vol.64 no.4 Winter 1991-92 p.501; *Le Monde* 3 février 1993.
- 415 *Radio New Zealand* 1 December 1992; *Le Banian* décembre 1992 p.4.
- 416 *Construire les Loyautés* janvier 1993 p.3.
- 417 Out of 3,782 participating voters, Hamu gained 978 votes, and Wénéwa received 819. *Le Monde* 16 février 1993.
- 418 "Il faut trouver un point de rendez-vous entre la vie traditionnelle du Kanak et le modernisme. [...] Les coutumiers et les politiques doivent travailler ensemble autour de la même table, pour regarder l'avenir." *Construire les Loyautés* septembre 1992 p.11.
- 419 In September 1992, the FLNKS participated in the French senatorial election in New Caledonia, which it lost to an RPCR candidate, Simon Loueckhote. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 1 septembre 1992; *Le Monde* 29 septembre 1992. This action broke the last vestiges of its boycott of national elections dating back to 1986.
- 420 Lafleur sold the SMSP at a far higher price than he bought it, and in the process divested himself of a company 80MFF in debt. It was estimated the Ouaco mine will be exhausted some time between 1995 and 2000. *Le Monde* 19 avril 1990, 20 avril 1990, 24 avril 1990; *Libération* 17 avril 1990; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 18 avril 1990.
- 421 *Le Monde* 3 février 1993.
- 422 Haut-Commissariat: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les accords de Matignon* p.40.
- 423 Ibid.
- 424 Ibid.
- 425 These investments were attacked by Lafleur, who once held a controlling interest in the Surf. He stated that they constituted an abuse of development funding intended for use in the North. Neaoutyine replied that the investments would none the less bring financial profit to the North and that the hotels could serve as stopover points for tourists travelling there. *The Weekend Australian* 7-8 November 1992; *Fiji Times* 17 November 1992. This latter explanation is implausible in that international travellers have to travel over 50km southward from Tontouta international airport to reach Nouméa, travelling directly away from the North Province.
- 426 For further analysis, see Australian Council for Overseas Aid: *From New Caledonia to Kanaky*.
- 427 Haut-Commissariat: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les accords de Matignon* p.17.
- 428 Ibid.
- 429 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.71.

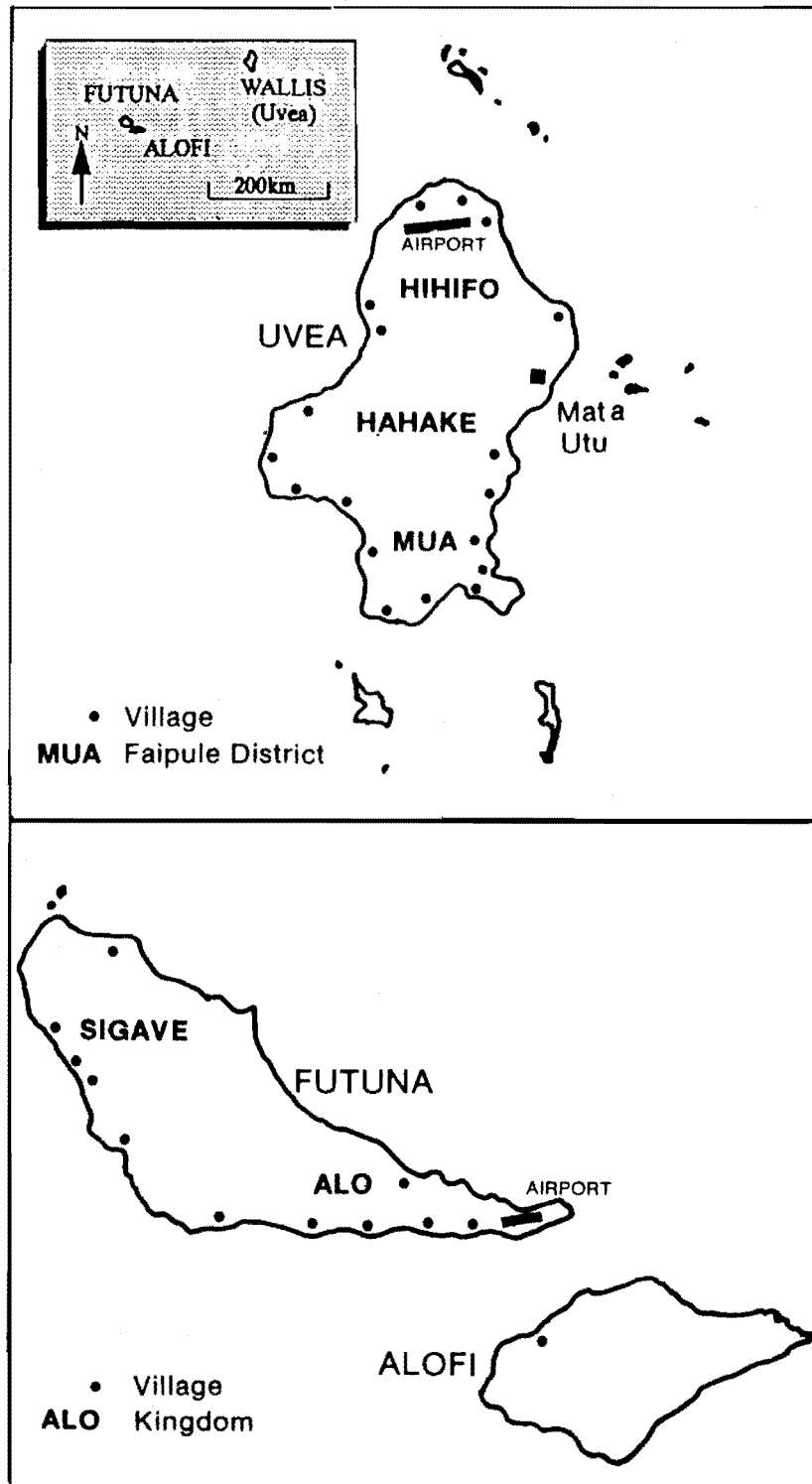
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- 430 *Le Monde* 14 août 1991.
- 431 Cited in Commission d'enquête: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie après les accords Matignon* p.62.
- 432 *Ibid.* p.51.
- 433 For a detailed summary of the positions of the member parties of the FLNKS see Leblic: *Les Kanak face au développement. La voie étroite* pp.190-212.
- 434 *Le Monde* 23 mai 1991, 17 octobre 1991.
- 435 INSEE, *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. Principaux résultats du recensement 1989* p.40.
- 436 The Loyalty Islands Province allocated 42.11% of its 1993 budget to education: *Construire les Loyauté* janvier 1993 p.22.
- 437 Haut-Commissariat: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les accords de Matignon* p.22.
- 438 *Le Monde* 5 mai 1992.
- 439 *Pacific News Bulletin* April 1992 p.9; Australian Council for Overseas Aid: *From New Caledonia to Kanaky* p.13.
- 440 *Le Banian* décembre 1992 p.2.
- 441 "La vieille idée chère à l'idéal républicain d'intégration des autochtones est aujourd'hui dépassée. Elle correspond peut-être à une époque de notre histoire [...]" Henri Emmanuelli: "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *Mondes et Cultures* tome 42 no.1 1982 p.9.
- 442 The few Kanaks who have read these authors have done so in French translations.
- 443 Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.258 ; Stephen Henningham: *France and the South Pacific: a contemporary history* pp.47-48; Ounei: *For Kanak Independence* p.4.
- 444 François Mitterrand: *Lettre à tous les Français* p.40.
- 445 FLNKS petition to the UN decolonisation committee, 9 August 1991 cited in *Pacific News Bulletin* September 1991 p.4.

Table 23. Wallis and Futuna. Basic Information

Land Area:	255km ² .
Maritime Zone:	300,000km ² .
Population (1990):	13,705.
Average Population	
Density (1990):	54 inhabitants per km ² .
Currency:	F CFP.
GDP (1983):	20MF CFP.
Average GDP	
per capita (1983):	1,569F CFP.
Principal Economic	
Activities:	Subsistence agriculture.
Administrative Status:	French Overseas Territory.
Political Representation:	One Senator in the French Senate. One Deputy in the French National Assembly.

Source: ITSEE: *TEC 1991*.

Map 6. Wallis and Futuna



Source: A. Ali & R. Crocombe (eds.): *Politics in Polynesia* p.3; Aldrich & Connell: *France's Overseas Frontier* p.49.

3. Wallis and Futuna

M. le Ministre, nous sommes le plus petit et le plus lointain territoire français d'outre-mer. Ne nous oubliez pas!

Kamilo Gata, Deputy for Wallis and Futuna, addressing
Le Pensec in the National Assembly, 8 November 1989.¹

The Neglected Isles?

Wallisian feelings of neglect and abandonment were well encapsulated in the plea made by Gata to the Minister to the DOM-TOM in 1989. However the charge of state neglect of this TOM was difficult to substantiate and there was some reason to suggest that the comment made by Gata represented attention-catching declamation of the variety employed in debate over New Caledonia. Not so much forgotten as considered peripheral, Wallis and Futuna has always been of marginal concern to Paris. With its tiny surface area, no significant exports, and fewer residents than some Parisian boulevards, (Table 23) the territory was understandably far from representing a pressing administrative concern.

State expenditure on the territory has been comparatively low, although this is a reflection of the low population level in the islands, and the correspondingly modest scale of administrative services required there. Government spending in Wallis and Futuna amounted to just under 0.68% of total state expenditure in the DOM-TOM in 1987.² By way of comparison, New Caledonia and French Polynesia were allocated respectively 13.12% and 16.37% of state DOM-TOM spending that year.³ In general such higher funding levels were due to the larger scale and populations of the rest of the DOM-TOM, although not in all cases. The French Antarctic, (Map 1) where the population consisted of 150 to 200 transient scientists,⁴ received 0.97% of state DOM-TOM expenditure in 1987.⁵ Saint Pierre and Miquelon, with several thousand fewer inhabitants than Wallis and Futuna,⁶ obtained 1.05%.⁷ These higher levels of spending reflected the more intensive capital costs involved in maintaining French scientific programmes in the Antarctic, and in subsidising the deep sea fishing fleet at St Pierre and Miquelon. Funding for Wallis and Futuna constituted a proverbial drop in the fiscal bucket compared to spending in the other inhabited DOM-TOM.

As a result of the smallness and economic insignificance of Wallis and Futuna, the administration of the islands was inevitably of less concern to Paris than the other two Pacific TOM. While the three components of the French Pacific had the same constitutional status, the lower standing of Wallis and Futuna was reflected in the rank of the chief administrator there. Unlike New Caledonia and French Polynesia, each of which have a High Commissioner as proconsul, Wallis and Futuna is overseen by a Superior Administrator. Residing in Mata Utu, the territorial capital, the Superior Administrator is subordinate to the High Commissioner of New Caledonia, stationed in Nouméa over 2,100km south-west.⁸ The presence of a functionary subordinate to the High Commission in Nouméa has been regarded as unsatisfactory by Wallisian leaders. In December 1986, custom chiefs proposed that the status of Wallis and Futuna be upgraded by the appointment of a High Commissioner to each of the islands' three kingdoms.⁹ (See Map 6) These grandiose aspirations were not heeded by Paris, which continues to hold the status of the three kingdoms in the territory in lower administrative esteem than their inhabitants would prefer. This gap between local feelings of self-importance and French administrative practice has been a major contributing factor to the Wallisian impression of being neglected by Paris.

As might be expected when viewed from Paris, Wallis and Futuna has had a minimal profile in state planning and national political debate. When they mentioned Wallis and Futuna at all, the Eighth and Ninth Plans for the DOM-TOM, from 1981 to 1988, made only passing mention of the territory, sometimes alongside more detailed discussion of New Caledonia and French Polynesia.¹⁰ Scant attention has been paid to Mata Utu in Parliament. The *Journal Officiel* contains hundreds of pages of debate and legislation concerning New Caledonia and French Polynesia in the period under examination, but very little discussion of Wallis and Futuna. The debate by the National Assembly on the DOM-TOM in June 1980 offered no more than brief reference to the territory, and that was largely thanks to the intervention of Benjamin Brial, then the RPR Deputy for Wallis and Futuna, who berated Dijoud for the alleged parsimoniousness of state funding to the islands.¹¹ This incident reflected a general trend in the treatment of Wallis and Futuna in the National Assembly. Parliamentary consideration of the TOM tends to amount to no more than a few minutes' mention of its financial situation in annual DOM-TOM budget debates, with an accompanying intervention from the Wallisian Deputy to complain about the tardiness and supposed inadequacy of state assistance.¹² This treatment should not be considered inappropriate. Few metropolitan French small towns with fewer than 15,000 inhabitants receive such attention at this level, and it could be argued by government officials in Paris that the amount of attention paid to Wallis and Futuna is in fact disproportionately high.

When the French Government devoted attention to its Pacific territories, Nouméa and Papeete understandably received priority attention ahead of Mata Utu. In the 1980s New Caledonian civil disorder and the complicated balancing act involved in satisfying the conflicting demands of its different political groups assumed greater importance than the development needs of placid Wallis and Futuna. Similarly, the strategic role of French Polynesia as the base for the French nuclear testing programme far outweighed what intangible benefits Wallis and Futuna's adherence to the Republic might provide. While various French commentators have asserted the importance of New Caledonia to France due to its mineral deposits, and French Polynesia's significance because of its nuclear role, few have offered convincing arguments of a similar nature for Wallis and Futuna.¹³ In 1985 Messmer described the territory as having strategic value because its position in the central Pacific was becoming more important with the passing of time.¹⁴ The strategic potential of Wallis and Futuna was as unfulfilled as that of the Chatham Islands. Any strategic resource worth Wallis and Futuna might enjoy was not distinguishably different from that of any other small island in the South Pacific with a largely unexploited and unexplored EEZ. Were Wallis and Futuna considered to be of increasing military strategic value by Paris, a military presence to guard it was the least that might be expected, yet no significant force had been based in Wallis and Futuna since US troops were stationed there during World War II.¹⁵

Ministerial level visits to Wallis and Futuna during the 1980s offered no hint that the islands were soon to undergo transformation into a new hub for French geostrategy. Few metropolitan French parliamentarians could lay claim to having visited Wallis and Futuna, indeed few had any need to do so. Each government representative for the DOM-TOM tended to make at least one trip to the islands during his term in office. Such excursions were usually part of a broader itinerary. Emmanuelli passed through on 12 August 1981 as part of his introductory tour of the Pacific TOM.¹⁶ Lemoine visited in December 1983 after consultations with New Caledonian leaders.¹⁷ Pons spent greater time in the islands than his predecessors, having travelled there in May 1986 before being appointed Minister to the DOM-TOM, as well as having paid visits in September and December 1986, in December 1987, and in March 1988.¹⁸ As a result, he was comparatively well acquainted with Wallis and Futuna. Only one French President, of the Fifth or of any other Republic, has visited Wallis: Giscard

**Table 24. Wallis and Futuna's Population
by Ethnic Group
1983, 1990**

1983

Group	Number	% of Population
Total Population	12,408	100
Wallisians	7,780	62.70
Futunans	4,322	34.83
Migrant French	295	2.38
Foreigners	11	0.09

Source: INSEE: *Territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 février 1983* p.31.

1990

Group	Number	% of Population
Total Population	13,705	100
Wallisians	8,540	62.31
Futunans	4,708	34.35
Migrant French	444	3.24
Foreigners	13	0.1

Source: INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna. Principaux résultats du recensement 1990* p.19.

d'Estaing passed through on 24 July 1979.¹⁹ His stop was tacked on to the end of a tour of French Polynesia. The itineraries of Chirac and Rocard, the two French Prime Ministers who visited the territory in the 1980s, followed a similar pattern. The first prime ministerial visit by Chirac to Wallis, for two days in September 1986, was made in between tours of New Caledonia and French Polynesia.²⁰ Chirac's time in the territory was rare in that it included what *Le Monde* described as a "saut de pouce" to Futuna for a few hours.²¹ The arrival of Rocard in Mata Utu on 24 August 1989 was a one day stop on a tour that encompassed Australia, New Caledonia, Fiji and French Polynesia.²² With the exception of Pons, none of these metropolitan French politicians could claim any intimate first-hand acquaintance with Wallis and Futuna on the basis of their brief stays. Considering the breadth and scale of their other ministerial responsibilities, this state of affairs was entirely appropriate. Again, by way of comparison, there existed in metropolitan France hundreds of villages the same size as Mata Utu which could not claim to have received this number of high-level official visits since 1979. While lobbying for improved communal funding their Mayors might also claim, not disinterestedly, to be neglected. As is the case with the plea made by Gata, such arguments should not be taken at face value.

Long Distance Dependency

Lying 20,000km and twelve time zones away from Paris, Wallis and Futuna is further from the capital than either New Caledonia or French Polynesia.²³ The remoteness of the territory from Paris is compounded by its physical isolation from its South Pacific neighbours. Of the Pacific TOM, the comments made by the Eighth Plan on the need to reduce isolation applied to Wallis and Futuna to the greatest degree, as the islands were not as well served by external air and sea links. Two weekly Boeing 737 return flights link Wallis with Fiji, New Caledonia and French Polynesia.²⁴ Until 1990, territorial shipping consisted of a 1,620t cargo vessel, the *Moana III*, owned by the Wallisian Navigation Company, which made annually ten or eleven return voyages to Wallis and Futuna from Nouméa.²⁵ Maritime activity in the territory was diversified in 1991 when Translink Pacific Shipping, a New Zealand-based company, opened a route between Wallis and Fiji. In addition to 12 return voyages made by the *Moana III* in 1991, three Translink vessels made 14 return voyages to Wallis that year.²⁶ These air and sea routes are important for the territory, although they involve small-scale and infrequent activity by comparison with those of New Caledonia or French Polynesia. For example, around 21 weekly international flights landed at Faaa airport on Tahiti during 1991, and 2,100 port calls were made at Papeete that year.²⁷ Once again though, all things are relative. The population of French Polynesia is over ten times greater than that of Wallis and Futuna. The larger tourist trade in French Polynesia, the greater westernisation of the territorial population (and the consequently greater reliance on imported goods), and the operations of the nuclear testing programme were contributing factors to this higher level of traffic.

Of the two main islands, Wallis enjoys better communications with the outside world, leaving Futuna disadvantaged within the wider territorial isolation. The higher population level of Wallis (Table 24),²⁸ and the longer history of a French presence there, have resulted in various advantages over Futuna. Wallis enjoys the prestige and benefits of the territorial capital, with its resident Superior Administrator, public servants, and the Catholic Archbishop. Wallis experienced modernisations such as the introduction of sealed roads, running water and electricity, before Futuna. Its cash economy is also larger than that of Futuna. Futuna has a domestic airport which reduces, but fails to eliminate, its isolation. Over 200km lie between the island and Wallis, a gap bridged by four weekly return flights. The aircraft which services this route, a

Twin Otter capable of transporting 15 passengers, does so thanks to the benevolence of the State. The plane itself was donated to the territory by the Chirac Government in 1986,²⁹ and its financially unviable route is kept open with state subsidies.³⁰ From Paris Futuna, along with the Marquesa Islands, and inland Guyane, rates as one of the most inaccessible permanently inhabited parts of the DOM-TOM.

Wallis and Futuna holds the dual distinction of being France's most distant and dependent possession. The economic limitations of the islands presented a small albeit recalcitrant challenge to the Eighth Plan's general goal of diversifying economic activity in the DOM-TOM. Of all the DOM-TOM, it was in Wallis and Futuna that the indicators of economic dependence on metropolitan France painted by the plan were most marked. And of the inhabitants in the DOM-TOM, Wallis and Futuna's population faced the greatest developmental obstacles with the smallest means. In spite of the growth of tertiary sector economic activity, during the decades since becoming a TOM in 1961, Wallis and Futuna retained its reliance on traditional subsistence agriculture, supplemented with some lagoon fishing. Possibilities for the expansion of the traditional economy were limited by geographical constraints. Only around a quarter of the territorial land area was suited to agriculture.³¹ Population growth in Wallis and Futuna in the second half of the twentieth century had created unprecedented pressure on natural resources. The resultant diminished chances of living comfortably and gaining social advancement within the tribal milieu through the inheritance of land, along with the attraction of paid employment in New Caledonia and in the New Hebrides, led to widespread emigration from the 1950s to the late 1970s.³² By 1983, more Wallisians were living in New Caledonia than in Wallis and Futuna.³³ For those who remained in tribal society, economic life was largely cashless, being centred on barter. In 1982, approximately 79% of the working population in the territory were essentially unwaged and engaged in subsistence agriculture. The lifestyle of the remaining 21% differed markedly, consisting mainly of salaried workers in public service.³⁴

Local commerce was, and continues to be, of a limited nature. In 1982 licensed businesses in the territory numbered 120. In Mata Utu, cash trade revolved around two small supermarkets, a hardware store with the territory's sole petrol station, two car dealerships, a garage, two butchers' and two clothes stores.³⁵ Mata Utu also possessed the only bank in Wallis and Futuna, a branch of the Indosuez Bank which opened in 1977.³⁶ These businesses were mainly owned by Europeans.³⁷ Immigrants to Wallis and Futuna were concentrated in non-agricultural employment. In 1983 296 non-indigenous inhabitants were resident in the territory, of whom around 200 were French Europeans.³⁸ Of the total immigrant population, which included unemployed dependents, 43.91% (130) were employed in non-agricultural work.³⁹ A far lower level of indigenous participation in paid employment existed. A total of 991 local Polynesians were in paid positions in 1983; 7.99% of the indigenous population.⁴⁰

The presence of salaried public service employees alongside unwaged subsistence agriculturalists was a source of profound economic inequality which official statistics tended to mask. In 1983 average GDP per capita for Wallis and Futuna amounted to 1,569F CFP. (Table 23) By Western standards, and by the standards of the other Pacific TOM, this amount was low. (Tables 1, 33) However this figure, to an even greater extent than GDP per capita figures for New Caledonia and French Polynesia, was a classic misuse of the arithmetic mean. As in the other Pacific TOM, because of the large gap in income between those who essentially earned little or no money and those inhabitants who had jobs, average per capita income statistics are rendered nonsensical. Wallisians living outside the cash economy and local public service employees marked the two extreme poles in this inequitable distribution of wealth. In 1982 an estimated

Table 25. Wallis and Futuna's Exports and Imports 1983-1991

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Exports(MF CFP)	0.15	2.8	0.21	- ¹	0.32	2.75	12.28	35.28	5.6
Imports(MF CFP)	951	1,302	1,219	No comprehensive data collected from 1986					
Coverage									
Rate (%)	0.016	0.22	0.017	"				"	

Sources: IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1988. Wallis-et-Futuna* pp.22, 23, *Rapport d'activité 1990 Wallis-et-Futuna* p.32, *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* pp.34, 35.

¹ Production disrupted by Cyclone Raja.

520 public servants working in Wallis and Futuna enjoyed a relatively affluent lifestyle on double pay in a personal income tax-free environment.⁴¹

For the territory the post-World War II era entailed a period of expansion for the tertiary sector in the absence of substantial secondary sector economic activities.⁴² The narrowness of territorial development was such that certain basic economic assumptions inherent in the Eighth Plan could not be applied there. The goal in the Eighth Plan of expanding light industry in the DOM-TOM represented an irrelevancy to the islands. Wallis and Futuna possessed inadequate resources and population to sustain modern manufacturing. Were light industry to be established in the territory, it would of necessity have to be export-orientated for want of a sizeable local market, but no promising potential foreign markets existed in any case.

Manufacturing in Wallis and Futuna largely consisted of artisanal activities and construction work. What little export activity existed consisted of international sales of stamps, trochus shells, some handicrafts, fruit, and vegetables. (Table 25) Trochus shells, the only product exported in sufficient volume to merit the compilation of official export statistics, were sold to trinket manufacturers in Italy. Most handicrafts, fruit, and vegetables were sold piecemeal in Nouméa.⁴³ Trochus or top shell exports increased substantially in the 1980s: the annual tonnage shipped rose from 1.5t in 1983 to 88.2t in 1990.⁴⁴ During this period the value of trochus exports climbed rapidly, from 0.15MF CFP in 1983, to 35.28MF CFP in 1990.⁴⁵ Production was erratic however. It was disrupted in 1986 due to cyclone damage, and in 1991 the amount exported dropped to 17t because of cyclone Ofa.⁴⁶ The future of trochus exports, like that of the subsistence economy, is conditioned by resource limits. Any attempt to expand harvesting beyond existing levels threatens resource sustainability.⁴⁷

Economic disequilibrium in Wallis and Futuna was the consequence of a growing dependence on imports, mainly food, fuel, construction materials and consumer goods.⁴⁸ By the 1980s this trend had led to a profound external trade imbalance. (Table 25) There was probably a link between this progression and the increasing numbers of the population in paid employment, who could afford consumer goods beyond the means of most of the population. However, this assumption is difficult to substantiate as detailed statistics are lacking concerning the precise nature of imported items. Rising import levels were also caused by the general expansion of public works and the periodic need for construction materials in bulk after cyclone damage. Imports have continued increasing in tonnage and value since the early 1980s. In 1983, the territory imported 10,324t of goods, worth 950MF CFP.⁴⁹ By 1990 imports amounted to around 17,000t, a gain on the 1989 level of 14,000t due to the burst of reconstruction activity after cyclone Ofa hit Wallis and Futuna in February 1990.⁵⁰ In 1991, imports fell to 15,500t.⁵¹ There are no figures available on the value of imports since 1986, as they have not been compiled since then. In 1985 however, the 8,905t imported were worth 1,219MF CFP.⁵² Historically imports have arrived via Nouméa. In 1990, 12,000t travelled this route.⁵³ The diversification of shipping since 1990 has led to the arrival of imports via a greater number of entrepôts. In 1991 4,335t arrived via Nouméa, 5,764t via New Zealand, 4,763t via Suva, and 638t via Vanuatu.⁵⁴

The economic possibilities that expanded tourism offered the French Pacific, as mentioned in the Eighth Plan, did not stretch to encompassing Wallis and Futuna. Far from major air and shipping routes, rendered inaccessible by the limited number of connecting international flights, lacking in hotel accommodation and tourist attractions, and largely unheard of by the outside world, the territory was not a promising base for tourism. Mata Utu offered only 25 hotel rooms in the mid-1980s, while Futuna had no hotel.⁵⁵ Attracting tourists to the islands was problematic. Wallis and Futuna's lack of an

international reputation as remarkable as that of French Polynesia, and its deficiency in facilities, posed considerable barriers to growth of tourism.

Although not as large a proposition as the resolution of New Caledonian troubles, the stimulation of durable economic development in Wallis and Futuna presented an intractable problem in the 1980s. Overcoming the narrow population and resource base in Wallis and Futuna, as well as its physical isolation, to implement the economic modernisation and regional integration optimistically proposed by the Eighth Plan represented an impossible challenge to Paris.

The Political Landscape

The election of Mitterrand in 1981 was an event that jarred on the political sensibilities of the local conservative Polynesian electorate. For the flowering of the Socialist rose, few less propitious places existed than Wallis and Futuna. The PS and other political parties of the French Left had no representatives in the Territorial Assembly, and few sympathisers among the indigenous population. In the last vestige of the French Republic to retain kingdoms, where Giscardians were regarded as dangerous radicals, where 85% of the population was church-going,⁵⁶ there was no room for Mitterrandian Socialism. Political life centred on attempts by the growing Giscardian camp to wrest power from local Gaullists, who had dominated territorial politics since the early 1960s. Giscard d'Estaing's following increased during the 1970s thanks to the advent of young liberals discontented with the Gaullist hegemony over territorial representation.⁵⁷ Local voters heavily supported Giscard d'Estaing in both rounds of the presidential elections in 1981. (Table 26) In the first round, he obtained a healthy majority of 60.08% of votes cast, followed by an impressive 97.37% in the second round. As well as reflecting the activism of local Giscardians, this mass support was partially due to Wallisian recognition of the incumbent's broader national support than Chirac. The unprecedented amount of interest the President had shown in Wallis and Futuna by actually visiting it was an additional source of popularity that should not be underestimated.

To an extent greater still than in New Caledonia, the political aspirations of local voters in 1981 were hostile to the PS, and out of tune with metropolitan French support for a Socialist future. Mitterrand gained a derisory 26 votes in Wallis and Futuna in the first round of the presidential elections, 0.54% of votes cast. In the second round, that total grew to a still insubstantial 113 votes, just 2.30% of votes cast. The bulk of Mitterrand's second round total probably consisted mainly of protest votes lodged by disenchanted supporters of the RPR. By the time of the legislative elections in June, some locals had shown enough interest in a Socialist future to organise a local PS candidate, M. Ata, although the response to his candidature from the territorial electorate was low. He received 175 votes, 3.34% of votes cast. (Table 27) The second round of the elections was to be a runoff between the local Gaullist and Giscardian candidates, a competition won by Brial. Ata participated in the territorial elections of 21 March 1982, thus holding the distinction of being the first PS candidate to stand for election to the assembly. The response of local voters was not enthusiastic. He gained only 144 votes, 2.83% of valid votes.⁵⁸

Not only were Wallis and Futuna's voting patterns discordant with those of metropolitan France in 1981, so too was its social structure. The territory stood as a bizarre anachronism in the context of Socialist plans for social renovation. Traditional Polynesian social structures, modified by the cultural penetration of Catholicism in the nineteenth century, formed a deeply engrained prevailing conservatism that had survived largely because of the isolation of Wallis and Futuna from the rest of the world. Wallis and Futuna was unique in being the only part of France where social systems akin to feudalism persisted.

**Table 26. French Presidential Elections, 1981.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 26 April

Registered voters	6,506
Votes cast	4,845
Turnout	74.47%
Valid votes	4,834

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing (UDF)	2,911	60.08
Chirac (RPR)	1,868	38.56
Mitterrand (PS)	26	0.54
Marchais (PC)	6	0.12
Others	23	0.47

Second Round: 10 May

Registered voters	6,515
Votes cast	4,905
Turnout	75.29%
Valid votes	4,889

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing	4,776	97.37
Mitterrand	113	2.30

Sources: *Le Monde* 28 avril 1981, 12 mai 1981.

**Table 27. French Legislative Elections, 1981.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 21 June

Eligible voters	6,559
Votes cast	5,103
Turnout	77.80%
Valid votes	5,083

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	2,393	46.89
Falelavaki (UDF)	1,892	37.08
Hoatau ¹	456	8.94
Ata (PS)	175	3.43
Muliloto ²	167	3.27

Second Round: 28 June

Eligible voters	6,555
Votes cast	5,144
Turnout	78.47%
Valid votes	5,128

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	2,642	51.36
Falelavaki (UDF)	2,486	48.33

Source: *Le Monde* 30 juin 1981.

¹ An independent left candidate.

² An independent right candidate.

The three kings in the territory sat at the head of monarchies which had retained their cultural and political integrity since 1842, when Wallis informally became a French protectorate at the instigation of Lavelua Soane Patita, the king of Wallis at that time.⁵⁹ Although some Church canons, such as the proscription of contraception,⁶⁰ were being abandoned by locals, the population remained more devoutly Catholic than the inhabitants of metropolitan France. Church and custom authority operated powerful brakes on change in Wallis and Futuna. By 1981, their powers had been but partially eroded by cultural and political forces from France.

The French State had however been a major impetus for change in Wallis and Futuna, particularly since the islands had lost their protectorate status under the Fifth Republic and became a TOM on 29 July 1961, on the promulgation of the territorial statute. On 27 December 1959, 94% of votes cast in a territorial self-determination referendum had backed integration into the Fifth Republic.⁶¹ Locals decided that continued association with France offered the islands a more secure future than the uncertainties independence would have implied. Under the protectorate, the Church had held greater authority in the islands than the State. Owing to their greater understanding of, and longer exposure to, local Polynesian culture, Marist priests had built up a privileged relationship with the three kings which gave them more authority than the succession of French Residents who served short-term postings to Mata Utu.⁶² This relationship was not overtly threatened by the new statute. Both religious and royal authority were recognised by Paris in the territorial statute of 1961. The integrity of traditional society was assured by articles 3 and 5, which guaranteed the respect of local customs and religion, as was the case elsewhere in the Fifth Republic. In the same manner as in New Caledonia, where Melanesian law was recognised, the exercise of Wallisian custom law was permitted provided it was not in violation of the French civil code, which locals were given the option of living under should they so choose. The Church received informal recognition of its prerogatives in the 1960s and 1970s through the non-application of French divorce and abortion laws.⁶³ Under article 10 the three kings sat *ex officio* on the Territorial Council, alongside the Superior Administrator and three local political appointees. These three appointees, who did not necessarily have to be Territorial Councillors, were chosen from the local population by the Superior Administrator with the approval of the Territorial Assembly.

The statute of 1961 nevertheless accorded administrative primacy to the State.⁶⁴ Under article 9, the Superior Administrator became the head of the territory, and governed Futuna via his delegate there. Article 7 indicated that the State held authority over territorial defence, law and order, external communications, education, the treasury, customs, state administration, finances and public health. The statute also tacitly offered potential for the erosion of church and custom through the democratisation of the territory. The establishment under article 11 of a Territorial Assembly with 20 members permitted the election of commoners to positions of local responsibility, and assured a fixed level of representation for Futuna by attributing its inhabitants seven seats. The full potential of democratisation under the statute was realised only from the 1980s. In the 1960s and 1970s, conservatives with strong links to the monarchs and the Church dominated the Territorial Assembly and the parliamentary representation of Wallis and Futuna. Local Gaullists, the majority of whom were Wallisians rather than Futunans, held or shared majority control of the Territorial Assembly from 1964 to 1992. A Wallisian, Benjamin Brial, the RPR Deputy for Wallis and Futuna, exemplified the continuity of conservative leadership for most of this period. In close association with custom authority,⁶⁵ he held the post of Deputy for Wallis and Futuna from 1967 to 1988. In this respect the situation differed from New Caledonian politics in the 1950s and 1960s. There the majority of indigenous voters, with the support of various Melanesian chiefs, followed the reformist UC.

The role of civil administration, whether state or territorial, slowly grew from the early 1960s, but did so in consultation with traditional powerholders. The limits of state power when it ignored local sentiment became apparent after an incident in November 1974. Jean de Agostini, then the Superior Administrator, was forcibly expelled from the territory at the hands of an angry crowd.⁶⁶ The source of the crowd's anger was a rise in local prices which they considered excessive. The half-a-dozen gendarmes present in the territory were unable to intervene effectively.

This embarrassing incident was not one which state representatives in Mata Utu wished to see repeated. When in October 1986, some of the advisors to the Wallisian king started campaigning for the eviction of Georges Jaymes, then Secretary-General to Wallis and Futuna, the reaction was vigorous. Although civil disorder had amounted to no more than some anonymous threatening telephone calls to Jaymes and a brick tossed through the window of an administrative office,⁶⁷ on 29 October Jacques Le Hénaff, then Superior Administrator, declared a state of emergency. In doing so, Le Hénaff employed powers outlined under article 8 of the 1961 statute.⁶⁸ The five gendarmes in the territory were reinforced by a platoon of motorised gendarmes flown in from Nouméa. After 26 uneventful hours the state of emergency was lifted. At the source of the incident was not the hand of the FLNKS, as *Le Figaro* wildly suggested,⁶⁹ but instead a dispute between the authority of State and custom. Le Hénaff announced that he would not tolerate the interference of custom authority in state affairs.⁷⁰ Jaymes's unpopularity was caused by his decision to post eight of his subordinates back to metropolitan France before their contracts had expired. Among the eight were a Subdivision Head and the Head of Rural Economic Services, who were well-liked by local custom leaders.⁷¹ However ineptly, and in the face of custom leaders' assertions that they should have been consulted,⁷² the declaration of emergency permitted the State to safeguard its prerogatives on Wallis.

The risk to state authority of not making an immediate and vigorous response to a local challenge from custom authority was demonstrated in 1993. The starting point for what turned into violent confrontation was an earthquake on 12 March, which resulted in the deaths of three people.⁷³ Some Futunans saw the natural disaster, the latest in a series which began with cyclone Raja in December 1986, as evidence of the Lord's wrath on an insufficiently devout population. Accordingly the Futunan kings of Sigave and Alo, Tuisigave and Tuiagaifo, decided in May to appease God. They forbade fishing on Sundays, and urged their subjects to forsake business and leisure activities on that day in preference to prayer. Philippe Legrix, who had been appointed in March 1993 as the Superior Administrator,⁷⁴ responded by indicating that the interdiction was a violation of Republican law and infringed civil liberties, in spite of claims by the two monarchs that they were acting within the bounds of the territorial statute. In June, Legrix suspended state funding to the two kings, and issued an ultimatum: unless the interdiction was lifted by 30 September, further state sanctions would be imposed. The deadline passed without any retraction from the two kings. On 3 October, a power cut on Futuna was interpreted as Legrix's reprisal. Several locals beat up Jean Mauro, his representative on the island. The administrative office on Futuna and official cars were vandalised. The following day, 10 gendarmes arrived from Nouméa to make inquiries. Two men were arrested. The two kings lifted their interdiction on Sunday fishing the same day.⁷⁵ The monarchs were unprepared to take their royal challenge to Republican authority any further and were perhaps unnerved by the extent to which the squabble had escalated into violence.

The expulsion of de Agostini in 1974 has constituted the greatest challenge in Wallis and Futuna to the authority of the Fifth Republic to date. Compared to the New Caledonian troubles in the 1980s this incident, the state of emergency in October 1986, and the unrest seven years later, were minor

confrontations. Other activism by royal authorities in the 1980s was marginal enough for the representatives of Paris not to bother reacting to it. For example, in November 1983, the two Futunan kings demanded that Futuna receive TOM status.⁷⁶ There was no future in this unrealistic proposal, which entailed an expression of feelings of Futunan neglect as well as of royal desires for higher status. Paris was as disinclined to follow this path as it was to adopt a Wallisian royal idea that each of the three kingdoms in the territory should receive their own High Commissioner.⁷⁷ Even more flattering to local monarchs than the Futunan proposal, this vision was never contemplated seriously by state representatives. None of the kingdoms were important enough to justify the expense this unwarranted expansion of state bureaucracy would have involved. These local pretensions were wildly at variance with the regard in which Wallis and Futuna was held by its metropolitan French administrators.

Developmental Continuity: from Dijoud to Pons

In comparing the policies for Wallis and Futuna of the various French Governments since 1981, a degree of continuity greater than that of policy concerning New Caledonia is perceptible. Successive administrations implemented various development schemes in Wallis and Futuna without great controversy, undistracted by ideological differences of the sort evoked in Paris by ethnic problems and the question of self-determination in New Caledonia. As a result of prevailing local conservatism and the islands' economic dependence on France, the option of independence has not been a serious issue of debate in Wallis and Futuna. As Brial indicated to the National Assembly in July 1986:

[...] le territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna [...] n'a jamais cessé de prouver son attachement et sa fidélité à la Ve République, afin de permettre d'améliorer son économie, sa culture, son artisanat, et d'assurer l'avenir de sa jeunesse [...].⁷⁸

The basic goals of the Eighth Plan, economic diversification, the improvement of living standards through modernised public facilities, and the promotion of economic growth via the reduction of territorial isolation, were not the source of protracted and vociferous debate as they were in the case of New Caledonia. Whether the Ministers overseeing the development of Wallis and Futuna in the 1980s were Giscardian, Socialist or Gaullist, they worked toward policy goals in a manner that did not entail the rushed legislation of a disruptive succession of revisionist statutes, as occurred in New Caledonia.

Wallis and Futuna's developmental orientation had already been established by Dijoud by the time of the appointment of the Mauroy Government in 1981. Parallel to the New Caledonian Dijoud Plan, another Dijoud Plan had been implemented in Wallis and Futuna. Wallis and Futuna's version was adopted by the Territorial Assembly on 24 July 1979,⁷⁹ five months after the adoption of its New Caledonian equivalent. The Plan was formulated after two decades without detailed territorial developmental planning under the Fifth Republic. Until the late 1970s the solution adopted in Paris to the pressure the islands' rapidly growing population was placing on local resources was to encourage emigration to New Caledonia and, to a lesser extent, to the New Hebrides. As a consequence of the economic downturn in New Caledonia from 1974, and the uncertain future that approaching independence represented for immigrants in the New Hebrides, work opportunities for emigrating Wallisians declined. To counterbalance these declining opportunities, the Dijoud Plan concentrated on promoting local economic self-sufficiency; this proved to be an unrealistic option.⁸⁰ The Plan covered a period of 20 years, of which detailed development projects were projected for the first ten years. The implementation of the Dijoud Plan was intended to enable Wallis and Futuna to become self-sufficient in food by the turn of the century. Exports would increase as a result

of a state-financed diversification of crop production (copra, coffee and pepper). Fishing beyond artisanal level would be set up by providing state-subsidised boats capable of deep sea operations.⁸¹ Increased funding was similarly proposed for the modernisation of communications and public services, the encouragement of arts and crafts for commercial sale, and for sporting and cultural activities in general.⁸² As with the Eighth Plan, Wallis and Futuna's Dijoud Plan neglected to consider the artificial nature of a projected territorial self-sufficiency dependent on state subsidies, technology and technicians emanating from Paris. The Dijoud Plan overestimated territorial productive capacity, as well as underestimating the resistance of local Polynesians to technological innovation, and the extreme difficulties territorial isolation posed in the creation of export markets for local produce. Regardless of these shortcomings, subsequent government development policy for the islands has continued to pursue the encouragement of territorial self-sufficiency,⁸³ even though the illusory nature of these optimistic prescriptions was to become increasingly apparent in the years that followed.

The first ministerial level visit by a Socialist to Wallis and Futuna in the 1980s was that paid by Emmanuelli on 12 August 1981. Showing more reserve than during his first New Caledonian tour the week before his arrival at Mata Utu, Emmanuelli did not publicly express shock at social inequalities in Wallis and Futuna. Unlike the radical political change he declared desirable for New Caledonia, a gentler prescription was to be applied to Wallis and Futuna. "L'effort du gouvernement tendra à faire évoluer la société [wallisienne] sans créer de traumatismes", Emmanuelli indicated.⁸⁴

Rather than a wave of social change of the sort implemented in New Caledonia, Emmanuelli limited government reform efforts in Wallis and Futuna to the improvement of territorial infrastructure (roads, port facilities, the health system, educational facilities) and to the diversification of the territorial economy.⁸⁵ The notable initiative made in the TOM during Emmanuelli's term as Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM was the establishment of an economic and social development fund in 1982.⁸⁶ Cautious reform by Emmanuelli was a measured response to Wallisian society's aversion to Socialist reformers, or indeed to anything to do with the Left. The improvement of territorial public works, continued under Lemoine, was an unspectacular policy, quite compatible with the Dijoud Plan, which was offered in order not to offend the conservative values of local leaders.

Before 1985 it is difficult to discern any specifically Socialist ideological influence in the administration of Wallis and Futuna. For most of this period, Socialist Ministers devoted their attention to more immediate and demanding subjects than France's most distant TOM. The microscopic nature of problems in Wallis and Futuna compared with issues confronting France at national level precluded the expenditure of any great effort on what was considered a minor portfolio. The major achievement of the Socialists in government between 1981 and 1986 was the signature of a state-territorial planning contract on 27 March 1985, which offered confirmation of the staid nature of Socialist Government reform in Wallis and Futuna. This contract prioritised development work to be undertaken by state and territorial representatives by 1988. Three goals set for agricultural development included soil protection and improvement, the expansion of irrigation, and increased afforestation. Undertakings for the improvement of the exploitation of fisheries included the construction of a boat-building workshop on Futuna and the establishment of a training scheme for fishermen. Local artisans, whose wares consisted of carvings, tapa cloths and trinkets, were to take a step towards commercialisation by sending their wares to Nouméa, to be marketed there by the New Caledonian Trades Council. Futuna was to receive a medical dispensary, electrification and further roading, while Wallis was to receive a maternity hospital, and improved port facilities.

Territorial secondary and technical teaching were to be expanded. Telecommunications facilities were programmed for upgrading.⁸⁷

By metropolitan French standards these were all extremely modest and easily achievable projects yet they represented important undertakings for the inhabitants of Wallis and Futuna. For instance, the lack of adequate roading and electrification on Futuna were serious barriers to the improvement of local living standards. When electrification was completed on Futuna in 1987, 16 years after its installation on Wallis, the island literally came out of the dark ages.⁸⁸ Futunan electrification might appear belated from a metropolitan French point of view. In general modern amenities have been late in arriving at Wallis and Futuna, as they have in rural New Caledonia and in the outer islands of French Polynesia. Local state radio broadcasting began in 1979, while state television broadcasting began in Wallis in 1986 and in Futuna in 1991.⁸⁹ The absence of these amenities was not surprising given the numbers living in the territory. Nevertheless, Wallis and Futuna lacked some amenities that other South Pacific islands with smaller populations have enjoyed for years. In 1993, no local press existed, although at least one Wallisian language newspaper published in Nouméa was in circulation, along with New Caledonian and metropolitan French newspapers and magazines. Niue, with a population of 2,500 in 1992, and Nauru with 9,300 inhabitants, are just two examples of micro-states with their own modest local newspapers.

In spite of the uncontroversial nature of their administration of Wallis and Futuna from 1981 to 1986, Socialist Governments in this period managed to aggravate Wallisian leaders. The source of rising Wallisian distrust of the Socialists during this period was the question of New Caledonian independence. In a reaction opposite to that of Kanaks, references to the possibility of New Caledonian self-determination by government representatives in 1984 and 1985 were contemplated nervously by Wallisian leaders. Limited numbers of Wallisian emigrants resident in Vanuatu had already returned to Wallis and Futuna since 1980, due to declining employment opportunities there for immigrant workers.⁹⁰ Wallisian authorities feared no less than the collapse of the economy of Wallis and Futuna and the breakdown of its social systems from overpopulation should the more than 12,000 Wallisians resident in New Caledonia be forced to leave by triumphant Kanak nationalism.⁹¹

Although this was the worst possible scenario, Wallisian leaders had cause to be nervous about the concept of Kanak independence. Kanak enmity towards Wallisian immigrants was well known. Kanaks and Wallisians were divided by their different ethnic origins, the former Melanesian and the latter Polynesian, and by their different religious preferences, respectively Protestant and Catholic. They were divided by politics too. Wallisians in New Caledonia preferred French loyalism to Kanak nationalism, fearing arbitrary eviction under a Republic of Kanaky. Wallisians were regarded by Kanaks as foreign interlopers brought into New Caledonia at the behest of the French. Wallisians were held partly to blame for depriving Kanaks of scarce jobs, and were resented for their tendency to support the RPCR.⁹² An incident on a European-owned farm near Ponérihouen in May 1985 offered an example of growing tensions between Kanaks and Wallisians. The FLNKS demanded that eight Wallisian farmhands, along with three Europeans and two Melanesians unsympathetic to Kanaks, be replaced by local unemployed Kanaks. Fearful of arson or other retribution, the landowner did as the FLNKS demanded and dismissed these employees.⁹³ The use of unemployed Wallisians in the RPCR security force in 1985 aggravated tensions between Kanaks and Wallisians.⁹⁴ In April 1985 a detachment of 35 Wallisians from this force, along with Henri Morini, their French Algerian leader, were held captive for 48 hours by Kanak activists on Maré.⁹⁵ These were not isolated incidents. Kanaks and Wallisian RPCR supporters confronted each other at various demonstrations during 1985, and several Wallisians were threatened and abducted by Kanak activists.⁹⁶

The response of Wallisian politicians and custom authorities was to act in the defence of their compatriots' interests. Wallisian leaders, notably Brial and Papilio, opposed Socialist reforms for New Caledonia in 1985, and backed the counterproposals of the RPCR.⁹⁷ Wallisian custom chiefs affirmed their support for retaining New Caledonian adherence to the French Republic, stressed the right of Wallisians to live and work in New Caledonia without harassment, opposed repatriation to Wallis and Futuna, and backed the RPCR in its opposition to Socialist and FLNKS policies.⁹⁸ In June 1985 Falakiko Gata, the President of the Territorial Assembly of Wallis and Futuna, pointed out to Mitterrand the disastrous effects that a massive repatriation of Wallisians living in New Caledonia would have should a Republic of Kanaky be established. He asked for additional funding to prepare for this eventuality. Mitterrand's response indicated that he thought this scenario was less imminent than Gata presumed.⁹⁹

In the campaign for the legislative elections of March 1986 opposition to New Caledonian independence was an important theme for Wallisians, whether inhabiting their home islands or New Caledonia. Lafleur visited Wallis and Futuna early in March 1986 to bolster Brial's campaign for re-election. Lafleur presented himself as the protector of Wallisian interests in New Caledonia, spoke of the dangers of Kanak independence for Wallisians, and stressed RPR and RPCR opposition to the break-up of the Republic.¹⁰⁰ Brial was re-elected on 23 March with 44.31% of votes cast, a reaffirmation of Gaullist continuity in the territory. (Table 27) However the influence of the RPR should not be overestimated. Brial had gained 51.36% of votes cast in 1981. The other Wallisian candidates were likewise opposed to Kanak independence. None the less Wallisian leaders regarded the appointment of the Chirac Government in 1986 with relief. Not only were Wallisian interests in New Caledonia less threatened with a Government in power which was openly hostile to Kanak independence, but the expectation existed among local RPR supporters that the Chirac Government would be more attentive to development issues in Wallis and Futuna.

As was the case in New Caledonia, in Wallis and Futuna Pons enjoyed better relations with local conservatives than had Lemoine and Emmanuelli. But as was also the case with New Caledonia, between 1986 and 1988 the Chirac Government did not lessen economic dependence and social inequality in Wallis and Futuna. The completion of the state-territorial development contract in 1988 reflected well on the Chirac Government, even though it had commenced under Fabius. On 31 August 1986 the announcement by Chirac in Mata Utu of the establishment of an emergency plan for the socio-economic improvement of the territory was warmly received.¹⁰¹ A positive reception was offered although there was little that was original in the plan. Comments made by Chirac in Mata Utu on the need to reduce territorial isolation through the modernisation of external communications, the need to upgrade territorial infrastructure and to lessen economic dependence rehashed well-worn themes dating back at least to Dijoud. Included in the 29.51MFF worth of projects foreseen under the plan were some which had already been in the 1985 development contract, namely the improvement of education, airport and hospital facilities and Futunan electrification.¹⁰²

An extraordinary aid intervention was undertaken by the Chirac Government after cyclone Raja hit Futuna on 26 and 27 December 1986. The cyclone resulted in one death, and destroyed crops and most of the buildings on the island.¹⁰³ By October 1987, 45.74MFF had been allotted by Paris to island reconstruction.¹⁰⁴ This effort permitted Futuna's recovery from a disastrous blow to its economy and infrastructure. The funding for this cyclone relief was generous, being around 50% greater than the amount offered under the existing emergency plan for socio-economic growth.

**Table 28. Wallis and Futunan Territorial Elections
1982-1992**

Territorial Results

21 March 1982

Party	Seats
RPR	12
UDF	8

15 March 1987

Party	Seats
RPR	7
UDF	7
UPL	6

22 March 1992

Party	Seats
Independents	11
RPR	6
Presidential Majority	3

Sources: *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* December 1984 p.33285, March 1988 p.35779; *Le Monde* 24 mars 1982; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 16 mars 1987, 24 mars 1992.

**Table 29. French Legislative Elections, 1986.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 16 March

Registered voters	7,852
Votes cast	6,318
Turnout	80.46%
Valid votes	6,304

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	2,570	40.68
Hoatau ¹	1,842	29.16
Tui ²	1,669	26.42
Maisueche ³	223	3.53

Second Round: 23 March

Registered voters	7,835
Votes cast	6,314
Turnout	80.59%
Valid votes	6,302

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	2,798	44.17
Hoatau	2,175	34.45
Tui	1,329	21.05

Source: *Le Monde* 19 mars 1986, 25 mars 1986.

¹ An independent left candidate.

² Although Basile Tui is a local UDF leader, he stood as an independent left candidate.

³ An independent left candidate.

Although the local majority preferred cohabitation to the uncertainties of Socialist administration, they still voiced support for reform. During the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the 1961 statute, held in July 1986, a spokesman for the Territorial Assembly called for a revision of the statute which would give the local population greater autonomy. Territorial leaders wanted both the security of Republican ties, and greater administrative control over local affairs. In spite of majority calls for statute reform, the Chirac Government resisted change.¹⁰⁵ No great administrative renovation for Wallis and Futuna was either promised or undertaken by the Chirac Government. Pons announced during a visit to the territory in December 1986 that he was unwilling to overturn the existing statute, and informed local leaders that they should leave the Government to manage state affairs.¹⁰⁶ In the aftermath of the declaration of emergency in October, Pons wished to avoid giving the appearance of yielding to local pressure.

The Impetus for Change

If impetus for statute change and a greater local say over Wallis and Futuna's administration was successfully resisted by RPR leaders in government in Paris, RPR Territorial Councillors found themselves less able to resist popular demands for political change. From 1981 Wallisian Gaullists, led by Brial, experienced steps in an ongoing electoral decline caused by local opposition in which Futunans played a prominent part. In the territorial elections held on 21 March 1982, (Table 28) RPR Councillors won 12 seats, ahead of the UDF candidates and independents who won the remainder.¹⁰⁷ A bout of political manoeuvring in November 1983 displayed the increased fluidity of local party distinctions: a UDF Councillor defected to the RPR group, followed by the counterdefection of three RPR Councillors to the UDF group.¹⁰⁸ Among the RPR defectors was Falakiko Gata, who was elected the new Territorial Assembly President. In April 1985 Gata, a Futunan discontented with the preponderance of Wallisian Gaullists, set up UPL, which solicited largely Futunan support. The territorial elections in Wallis and Futuna on 15 March 1987 (Table 28) resulted in a major reversal for the Wallisian Gaullists' long-standing dominance in local political life, perhaps caused by public disappointment at their inability to effect statute reform. Only seven of the 20 seats in the Territorial Assembly went to Gaullists.¹⁰⁹ UPL gained six seats in March 1987.¹¹⁰ The RPR stayed out of opposition in March 1987 by forming a pragmatic coalition administration with the UPL, and backed the election of Falakiko Gata as President. Basile Tui, the local head of the UDF, was defeated in the election. His party's seven Councillors formed the Opposition.

Local Gaullist fortunes seemed to have recovered during the French elections from April to June 1988. If not at territorial level, then at least in national elections the RPR was still a redoubtable force. In the presidential elections, Chirac received 52.21% of the Wallisian vote in the first round, and 73.19% in the second round. (Table 30) The UDF was sidelined. The liberal candidate, Raymond Barre, received 39.27% of votes there in the first round. In the results of that round, the lack of a substantial PS following was once again evident. Mitterrand, arguably better known to Wallisians than he had been in 1981 thanks to his seven years in office, obtained but 7.21% of the local vote. His support jumped in the second round, when he received 26.42% of votes, but as in 1981 this increase was probably the result of protest votes lodged by Wallisians who did not want to vote for an RPR candidate. Overall, as was the case in 1981, Wallis and Futuna's electors polled against the national trend, backing the loser in the presidential race.

The re-election of Brial in the June legislative elections (Table 31) seemed to be indicative of the continued strength of the local RPR vote in national elections. Brial was re-elected on 12 June with 52.0% of the vote in the

second round. Kamilo Gata, a 30 year-old university-educated Futunan, and the brother of Falakiko Gata, was the opposition candidate in the second round. With the support of UDF voters and other opponents of Brial, Gata obtained 47.66% of the vote. As in 1981, a PS candidate was presented, Joseph Maisuèche, although his score was marginal.¹¹¹ He obtained 3.93% of votes cast (246 votes) in the first round, which was inadequate to warrant participation in the second ballot. Brial, and the reputation of his party, experienced a major débâcle following the lodging by Kamilo Gata of an appeal on the grounds of electoral irregularities. Gata's allegation that Brial's supporters had rigged the vote was upheld by the Constitutional Council. In a decision promulgated on 23 November 1988, the body found that the poll had been tampered with. By lodging multiple votes under assumed names, Brial's followers had taken advantage of the fact that around 30% of voters on local electoral rolls no longer resided in the territory.¹¹²

In the rerun of the election which was held on 15 January 1989, Kamilo Gata defeated Brial, not only gaining 57.44% of valid votes, but doing so on a presidential majority platform.¹¹³ Since June 1988, Gata had boldly declared his allegiance to the MRG, a minor French party electorally allied with the Socialist majority. This victory for Kamilo Gata was a sign of local disenchantment with Brial's electoral methods, as well as being indicative of a broader RPR electoral decline. The extent of local disenchantment with the RPR has been confirmed in more recent national polls. In the territorial vote for the European parliamentary elections on 18 June 1989, 54.86% of votes went to the PS, while the national UDF/RPR coalition obtained 41.14%.¹¹⁴ The recent electoral success of Kamilo Gata contributed to this result, as did the difficulty of convincing rival Wallisian RPR and UDF supporters to vote for a joint ticket. Confirmation that the election of Kamilo Gata had not been a short-lived fluke came in the legislative elections of March 1993. (Table 32) In their second round on 28 March, standing again as an MRG candidate, Gata defeated Clovis Logologofolau, the RPR candidate. He did so by a comfortable margin, gaining 52.18% of votes cast. Logologofolau obtained 47.38% of votes cast, a conservative defeat in a national ballot where the RPR/UDF coalition swept the polls. (Table 21)

Local Gaullists experienced similar setbacks in the territorial elections held on 22 March 1992. (Table 28) Although the RPR gained seats in comparison with the 1987 elections, it lost its place in the governing majority. It also lost the territorial presidency, which had been assumed by Logologofolau since 1987. Soane Uhila, the new Territorial Assembly President, was elected on 25 March 1992 with the backing of independent and presidential majority representatives.¹¹⁵ Uhila was an independent candidate, employed as territorial secretary by the trade union Force Ouvrière.¹¹⁶ By 1 September 1992, the date of the opening of the first sessions of the new administration, Uhila was leading a coalition of six presidential majority Councillors, and five independents, with the remaining nine RPR Councillors forming the Opposition.¹¹⁷ The new administration constituted a novelty in including Territorial Councillors sympathetic to Mitterrand. In addition, not only was this the first time that local RPR representatives had been in opposition since 1964, it was also the first time the Territorial Assembly had included women, two having been elected in March.¹¹⁸ The significance of this latter event should not be underestimated: traditional values in Wallis and Futuna have largely excluded women from leadership roles. Wallis and Futuna's territorial leadership in the early 1990s had become considerably less conservative than it was a decade before.

Political change has likewise taken place in the Wallisian community in New Caledonia since the late 1980s. An expression of the political disillusionment of a minority of local Wallisians with the RPCR, the UO was formed in May 1989 to participate in the New Caledonian provincial elections. (Table 18) This was not the first time that Wallisians had acted on their discontent with the RPCR,¹¹⁹ but it was the first time that Wallisians were

**Table 30. French Presidential Elections, 1988.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 24 April

Registered voters	8,316
Votes cast	6,020
Turnout	72.39%
Valid votes	6,013

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Chirac (RPR)	3,143	52.21
Barre	2,364	39.27
Mitterrand (PS)	434	7.21
Le Pen (FN)	37	0.62
Lajoinie (PC)	2	0.03
Others	33	0.54

Second Round: 8 May

Registered voters	8,315
Votes cast	6,412
Turnout	77.11%
Valid votes	6,387

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Chirac	4,693	73.19
Mitterrand	1,694	26.42

Sources: *Le Monde* 26 avril 1988, 10 mai 1988.

**Table 31. French Legislative Elections 1988.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 5 June

Registered voters	8,316
Votes cast	6,259
Turnout	75.26%
Valid votes	6,241

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	2,736	43.71
Gata ¹	2,235	35.71
Tui (UDF)	1,024	16.36
Maisueche ²	246	3.93

Second Round: 12 June

Registered voters	8,309
Votes cast	6,475
Turnout	77.93%
Valid votes	6,453

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Brial (RPR)	3,367	52.0
Gata	3,086	47.66

Source: *Le Monde* 7 juin 1988, 14 juin 1988.

¹ A Barrist, independent candidate.

² Presidential majority/PS.

elected at territorial level on an independent party platform. The UO denounced the RPCR for failing to act in the best interests of Wallisian immigrants, and declared that only through independent lobbying would they gain better political representation and the capacity to improve their socio-economic status.¹²⁰ This independent stance had certain limitations in that whether Wallisians stood independently or with the RPCR, their representation in the Territorial Assembly had always been minor, usually consisting of two Councillors.

Wallisian leadership on home ground and in New Caledonia faced the second period of Socialist Government from April 1988 to March 1993 with a less conservative outlook than in 1981. Kamilo Gata typified a younger generation, more travelled, better educated and open to change, which was exerting greater influence on local political life.¹²¹ Since 1989, Wallisians at home and in New Caledonia have lobbied Paris for greater recognition of their interests. In January 1990 the UO sent a delegate to Paris to voice resentment at the lack of specific recognition by the Matignon Accords of the Wallisian community (New Caledonia's third largest ethnic group).¹²² UO lobbying did not produce any concrete commitment from the Rocard Government, certainly not to the extent of expanding the Accords to include the Wallisian community as a separate partner, as the party optimistically proposed in January 1990. However Wallis and Futuna's leaders made some progress in lobbying Paris for a revision of policy concerning their territory.

The first major expression of interest by the Rocard Government in Wallis and Futuna came with Rocard's arrival in Mata Utu on 24 August 1989. Rocard's visit to the territory was the first paid there by a Socialist Prime Minister. His speech at Mata Utu that day was cautious in tone, avoiding matters which might have offended the Wallisian royalty present. Rocard characterised the governmental position of respect for local customs and institutions as well as support for reform as entailing "progrès dans la coutume".¹²³ However, like Pons, Rocard was unenthusiastic about revising the 1961 statute:

Je crois en effet que les institutions du Territoire, qui datent de 1961, ont besoin d'être modernisées. Mais est-ce la priorité? Le débat institutionnel est un débat qui divise. Je considère, moi, que la priorité, c'est la formation, l'emploi, le progrès économique et social.¹²⁴

In keeping with the cooperation theme of his Pacific tour, of which Mata Utu was only one leg, Rocard stressed the importance of avoiding divisive debate between the State and local political and custom representatives over redrafting the statute. He preferred instead to concentrate on ongoing development work. While advancing this message, he outlined the need to diminish Wallis and Futuna's isolation and its economic dependence:

Il faut que vous dépendiez moins de la métropole, moins de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, il faut davantage mettre en valeur vos ressources naturelles. [...] La volonté du gouvernement est de tourner la page de l'isolement et de l'enclavement de votre territoire.¹²⁵

Rocard's words could equally have been spoken by Pons or Chirac during their visits to Wallis and Futuna, or by visiting Ministers all the way back to Dijoud ten years before. His declaration followed in the well-established orientations of territorial development decided on in Paris. Through the commercial exploitation of local resources and the reduction of territorial isolation, Wallis and Futuna would become more self-reliant and the standard of living of its inhabitants would be improved. The efforts undertaken during his period as Prime Minister were steady but unremarkable, involving the improvement of territorial telecommunications, the extension of the local television network to Futuna, and the continuation of agriculture and fisheries projects.

Although Rocard expressed his reservations over immediate statute reform, vague Wallisian demands for such reform did not dissipate, and his Government later undertook to discuss the matter. On 1 August 1990 Le Pensec, then Minister to the DOM-TOM, announced that the Government would hold round table discussions in Paris with territorial leaders on "le progrès social, le développement économique et la modernisation des institutions [territoriales]".¹²⁶ Logologofolau and Kamilo Gata led a territorial delegation to Paris for meetings in June 1991. They presented a 27-page draft of a "plan directeur de développement économique, social et culturel" to Le Pensec. The proposal was presented as having, and had, the support of all of Wallis and Futuna's political parties.¹²⁷

The proposal, according to *Le Monde*, consisted of a list of the various improvements that the Territorial Assembly wished to see implemented: the construction of new roads and the sealing of old ones, the extension of running water to a greater number of houses, the installation of more telephone lines, the lengthening of local airport runways, the expansion of port facilities, job creation, further assistance to agriculture and fisheries, and the development of tourism.¹²⁸ Local politicians shared the developmental orientations advocated by Rocard and his predecessors, but were not satisfied with the pace of change. They wanted more material improvements, introduced more rapidly than those of preceding years.

The accusation of territorial neglect by a distant, impersonal bureaucracy that Kamilo Gata had made in the National Assembly in November 1989 was reiterated by Logologofolau and his First Secretary, Mikaele Tauhavili:

Nous avons l'impression d'être les oubliés de la République. Pourquoi n'avons-nous pas les mêmes avantages que les autres territoires d'outre-mer? Nous constatons que nous sommes moins bien traités que la Nouvelle-Calédonie et que la Polynésie [française] [...] On ne nous donne pas les moyens publics de nous développer malgré les multiples rapports officiels sur notre situation, et on nous empêche de créer un développement avec le secteur privé [...] Nous avons l'impression que nous sommes sanctionnés à cause de notre fidélité à la France. Faut-il poser la question de notre appartenance à la France pour être mieux considérés?¹²⁹

The pair no doubt had the Kanak nationalist movement in mind when they posed this question. Their assertion that Paris responded more readily to disruption than to representations through normal administrative channels was an attempt to influence official opinion there and was overstated. The veiled threat that Wallis and Futuna might push for independence if disillusionment with Paris persisted was absurd. There had never been any great electoral support for independence in Wallis and Futuna. Territorial dependence on French munificence for the maintenance of local social services, and public works, as well as agricultural and fisheries projects, left its inhabitants ill-disposed toward claiming sovereignty. It was ridiculous to state that territorial representatives were being sanctioned or were forgotten on the occasion of an official visit to Paris to discuss reform. The claim that Wallis and Futuna was less well-treated than the other two Pacific TOM was a questionable one. While Mata Utu might not enjoy all the modern conveniences of Papeete or Nouméa, that circumstance was more a reflection of the different population levels of the three centres than evidence of neglect. On the other hand, parts of the interior of the Grande Terre and the outer islands of French Polynesia were at the same level of development as Wallis and Futuna, or were even less well off. The assertion that the territory had not been given the means to develop itself was likewise open to scrutiny. Might not the marginal possibilities for the expansion of entrepreneurialism be the consequence of the extremely limited resources of the territory, and of local social conservatism, rather than the fault of Paris?

**Table 32. French Legislative Elections 1993.
Wallis and Futunan Results**

First Round: 21 March

Registered voters	6,618
Votes cast	5,794
Turnout	87.55%
Valid votes	5,753

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Gata ¹	2,626	45.32
Logologofolau (RPR)	2,175	37.54
Uhila ²	952	16.43

Second Round: 28 March

Registered voters	6,611
Votes cast	5,876
Turnout	88.88%
Valid votes	5,850

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Gata	3,066	52.18
Logologofolau (RPR)	2,784	47.38
Uhila ³	0	0

Source: *Le Monde* 23 mars 1993, 30 mars 1993.

¹ Presidential majority candidate.

² An independent candidate.

³ Soane Uhila stood down in favour of Logologofolau, but was still registered for the ballot.

The infrastructural improvements advocated by the territorial delegation could not be considered particularly bold or innovative. They were in line with government public works efforts that continued into the 1990s. Le Pensec was slower to react to the idea of statute reform. In July 1992, he visited Wallis and Futuna and announced that he was open to further representations about the future status of the territory, which might involve an evolution to greater administrative autonomy.¹³⁰ In March 1993 it was announced by the outgoing Socialist administration that Wallis and Futuna was to be granted internal autonomy, although precise details on the timetable for this step were not forthcoming.¹³¹ Wallis and Futuna, unlike the other two Pacific TOM, had been left untouched by the decentralisation policies advocated by French Governments from 1981.¹³² Whether similar renovations will be implemented in Wallis and Futuna and what their effects might be is one of the salient political questions facing local political leaders in the 1990s.

No major renovation in government thinking concerning Wallis and Futuna's administration has taken place since the Dijoud Plan in 1979. Socialist and Gaullist development plans since Dijoud have largely followed its precedent. Wallisian demands for a revision of the 1961 statute failed to evoke a positive response from Paris until 1991. Although since 1988 Wallisian parliamentarians have been more vocal in denouncing asserted Parisian inflexibility and slowness in implementing change in Wallis and Futuna,¹³³ Paris has not shown any haste over statute discussions. With the appointment of the Balladur Government in March 1993, the tentative consideration by Le Pensec of statute reform may lose what impetus it had or be discarded. There has been no indication that the reluctance of metropolitan French RPR leaders to respond to Wallisian demands in this field has diminished. As Perben, the new Minister to the DOM-TOM, indicated, he considered socio-economic improvements rather than statute reform to be his priority.¹³⁴

The 1990s: Persistent Dependence

As in New Caledonia under the Matignon Accords, the State's intention of decreasing Wallis and Futuna's dependence through funding for various development schemes has paradoxically led to the consolidation of territorial reliance on metropolitan French assistance. Since 1981, administrative services in Wallis and Futuna have expanded in response to the increasing demands placed on them by the implementation of various aid plans. From 1986 to 1991, the number of people employed in the public sector grew from 761 to 1,026, although as a proportion of the growing numbers of those in paid employment these figures represent a marked drop from 82.27% to 62.26%.¹³⁵ This growth in the public sector, as well as more rapid growth affecting people in the private sector, has tended to aggravate the inequalities already existing between the waged and unwaged working population. Public and private sector employees enjoy a level of purchasing power far beyond that of subsistence farmers, enabling them to buy consumer goods and to experience a standard of living beyond the means of those in the tribal milieu.

Rocard indicated his awareness of this situation during his visit to Mata Utu in August 1989. Reacting to claims made by local civil servants that their salaries should be raised, Rocard rejected this idea as it would lead to an increase in the disparities between the living standards of those in the public sector, the small private sector, and the mass of workers outside the cash economy.¹³⁶ Rocard mentioned that job creation was the way to improving the lot of those not in paid employment, but this proposal stumbles on the narrow range of territorial economic activity. The number of inhabitants in paid employment increased in number from 1983 to 1990. In 1983 there were 1,121 people of 5,552 inhabitants aged from 17 and a half to 65 years who worked outside of subsistence agriculture.¹³⁷ Thus 20.20% of the working age population was in

paid employment. In 1990, out of territorial inhabitants 14 years and over, there were 1,406 people in paid employment of 7,080 people aged from 16 to 65.¹³⁸ This figure represented 19.86% of the working age population in paid employment.

Private sector employment opportunities increased in the 1980s, although such activity in Wallis and Futuna remained marginal by Western standards. In 1987, private sector employment represented 22.56% of the work force in paid employment, a percentage which rose to 37.74% by 1990.¹³⁹ This private sector rise was a reflection of the increased work opportunities offered by public works projects, both as a part of ongoing state development initiatives, and as a result of reconstruction work undertaken after cyclone damage caused in December 1986 and in February 1990.¹⁴⁰ The IEOM described these employment gains as fragile, because they comprised work on short-term projects stemming from disaster relief and government contracts.¹⁴¹ There existed no alternative fields in the private sector which might sustain similar growth.

In spite of the increasing number of wage earners in Wallis and Futuna in the late 1980s, Indosuez did not apparently view the territorial economic situation with optimism. In November 1989, the sole local trading bank closed down for want of sufficient custom to justify its continued presence. Westpac Banking Corporation, which bought up Indosuez's South Pacific branches in 1990, did not show any interest in reopening the branch. For two years, local savings had to be held by the territorial treasury while local political leaders lobbied the State to find a replacement. In 1991, the Wallis and Futuna Bank began trading. This was an operation jointly financed by the territorial administration, the National Bank of Paris, and the Caledonian Investment Bank.¹⁴²

Since 1981, government plans to stimulate economic diversification in Wallis and Futuna have not resulted in major advances. Apart from trochus shells, by the early 1990s local exports were insignificant, while heavy dependence on imports persisted. (Table 25) Manufacturing continued to be concentrated on construction and handicrafts in the absence of a viable base for modern light manufacturing.¹⁴³ In 1991, territorial agriculture was still centred on subsistence consumption. State efforts to stimulate production beyond this level had not been very successful. Local farmers, preferring established foods such as taros, yams, cassava and bananas, have resisted attempts to diversify crop production through the introduction of more exotic fruits and vegetables. Traditional land tenure, based on family plots of between 0.25ha and 0.5ha, has prevented commercially viable cash-cropping, and European innovations such as chemical fertilisers and modern farm machinery have been rejected by locals in favour of the continued use of traditional agricultural tools and techniques.¹⁴⁴ While territorial politicians like Logologofolau have attempted to place blame on Paris for the feebleness of the private sector in Wallis and Futuna, it should be recognised that local unwillingness to abandon traditional forms of agriculture precludes the major expansion of commercial agriculture.

Commercial fishing is similarly limited because of a reluctance to go beyond subsistence levels of production. Territorial fisheries exploitation in the early 1990s remained restricted to lagoons, despite plans to expand it. A state-funded workshop allowed local fishermen to buy cheap boats, of which it had built around 500 by 1991. Although this activity had assisted lagoon fishing, commercial fishing was limited. The prospects of commercial deep sea fishing by locals looked unpromising, as they lacked the large vessels and the trained personnel necessary to bring in profitable catches.¹⁴⁵ Foreign trawlers retained their dominance over the exploitation of Wallis and Futuna's EEZ, although their presence at least provided license revenue for the territory.

For want of facilities and international awareness of the territory, tourism has not been an area of major growth since 1981. In December 1991 four hotels

on Wallis offered 30 rooms in total. Futuna still had no hotel accommodation. The average occupancy rate that year was estimated at 15%. Around 90% of visitors were businessmen.¹⁴⁶ Wallisian political leaders would like to see the number of hotel rooms in the territory expanded to 200,¹⁴⁷ however this idea is a pipe dream considering the marginal level of local tourist activity. Cultural conservatism may also prevent any major future influx of tourism revenue. A proposal by Club Med to build a resort on Faiva Island, just off the coast of Wallis, would have offered a major boost to local tourism. However the king of Wallis vetoed the offer in 1987, fearing the deleterious moral effects the presence of scantily-clad, hedonistic European tourists would have on his subjects.¹⁴⁸ Custom authorities may well block any future proposals for tourist resorts.

Traditional society in Wallis and Futuna is far from having been eroded by French influences to the same extent that Melanesian cultures in New Caledonia have been. European immigration has remained limited, consisting mainly of metropolitan French civil servants who are posted to the territory for fixed periods. In 1990 97.67% of the 13,705 inhabitants in the territory were either Wallisian or Futunan. The remainder amounted to 457 immigrants, of whom just 13 were not French.¹⁴⁹ No alienation of land took place in Wallis and Futuna in the nineteenth century because of limited European settlement. The absence of a large, permanent non-indigenous population has allowed the three kingdoms to retain control of local resources. In the eyes of state functionaries and of liberal territorial politicians this royal resistance to change is negative, forming a barrier to the commercialisation of agriculture and fisheries, as well as to the growth of tourism. The three monarchs of the territory might counter with the argument that it was preferable that traditional society retained a level of control over its destiny which Tahitians, and the Melanesians of the Grande Terre of New Caledonia, no longer enjoyed. Social changes brought about by non-indigenous settlement in New Caledonia and French Polynesia since the nineteenth century had exercised a destabilising influence on indigenous identity there. No such problem existed in Wallis and Futuna. Both had retained their cultural identities. The low level of mixing between Wallisians and Futunans should be noted too. In 1990, 69 Wallisians were resident in Futuna, and 105 Futunans in Wallis.¹⁵⁰ Although forming a minority in the territory, Futunans have maintained their insular cultural identity.

French culture in Wallis and Futuna continued to make inroads because of the gradual improvement of state educational facilities, although a significant proportion of the territorial population could still not speak French. In 1990, it was estimated that of the territorial population aged ten years and over 76.5% spoke French, 73.7% could read it, and 72.3% could write it.¹⁵¹ In New Caledonia in 1989, 97.1% of indigenous Melanesians aged ten years or more could speak French, 92.6% could read it, and 92.9% could write it.¹⁵² In French Polynesia in 1988, 88.6% of full Polynesians aged ten years or more could speak French, 84.4% could read it and 82.7% could write it.¹⁵³ In metropolitan France in 1990, it was estimated by the INSEE that of the population aged 18 years and over, 9.1% could neither speak, read, write nor understand French well.¹⁵⁴ The educational attainments of the indigenous population aged six years and over in 1990 were likewise low by metropolitan French standards, and in comparison with the other two Pacific TOM. Of Wallisians, 12.0% had not been to school, 65.1% had not progressed beyond primary level, 22.4% had attained secondary level and 0.5% had gained tertiary level education. The respective figures for Futunans were 19.9%, 63.9% 16.0% and 0.3%.¹⁵⁵ The ongoing improvement of educational facilities in the territory will improve educational levels and knowledge of French in years to come, although the lack of local tertiary and vocational training facilities hinders the growth in the number of those receiving higher education. Considering the small

population base, the State cannot justify the construction of local educational facilities beyond secondary level.

In spite of the improvement of living standards in Wallis and Futuna throughout the 1980s as a result of state development funding, government programmes have yet to overcome what are viewed from Paris as basic local economic limitations. State organisation of improved communications, public services and development schemes was incapable of surmounting the islands' isolation, small population base, and meagre natural resources. The metropolitan French economic outlook, which equated development with the expansion of the cash economy, and the introduction of capitalist socio-economic values, was ill-adapted to changing this situation. The reluctance of the three kingdoms to abandon their traditional values may have been viewed as backward from a European economic perspective. But as long as the French State continues subsidising the material demands of the local population, and provided that large numbers continue to leave the territory, the existing economic balance should remain viable, however unsatisfying it might be for state planners. The maintenance of a Polynesian subsistence economy alongside an 'unproductive' cash economy dominated by services might be a more rational response to the constraints of the local natural and cultural environment than the state development model.

Notes

- ¹ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 novembre 1989 p.4802.
- ² 122.52MFF of 18,136.79MFF. Jean-Luc Mathieu: *Les DOM-TOM* p.217.
- ³ 2,381.17MFF and 2,969.58MFF respectively. *Ibid.*
- ⁴ *Ibid.* p.10.
- ⁵ 176.13MFF. *Ibid.* p.217.
- ⁶ Saint Pierre and Miquelon had around 6,100 inhabitants in 1990. Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.19. A 1990 census gave Wallis and Futuna's population as 13,705. INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna. Principaux résultats du recensement 1990* p.10.
- ⁷ 191.20MFF. Mathieu: *Les DOM-TOM* p.217.
- ⁸ See article 7, "Loi no.61-814 du 29 juillet 1961 conférant aux îles Wallis et Futuna le statut de territoire d'outre-mer" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 30 juillet 1961 p.7019.
- ⁹ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 décembre 1986.
- ¹⁰ See Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* pp.28, 37-38, 57-58, 60. Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du neuvième plan 1984-1988, passim.*
- ¹¹ *Le Monde* 13 juin 1980.
- ¹² For example *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 6 novembre 1982 p.6795, 18 novembre 1983 pp.5388, 5412, 27 octobre 1984 p.5302, 6 novembre 1985 p.3941, 9 novembre 1986 pp.6071, 6102.
- ¹³ One of the few to argue thus, *Le Figaro* attempted to suggest, in an article with a dearth of supporting evidence, that the Soviet Union and the United States coveted the islands. See *Le Figaro* 30 octobre 1986.
- ¹⁴ "Wallis et Futuna ont une position stratégique au centre du Pacifique Sud qui ne cessera de s'affirmer et de devenir de plus en plus intéressante à mesure que le temps passera." *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 14 octobre 1985.
- ¹⁵ Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.182.
- ¹⁶ *Le Monde* 28 août 1981.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.* 4-5 décembre 1983.
- ¹⁸ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 5 mai 1986, 13 décembre 1986, 10 décembre 1987; *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 2 septembre 1986.
- ¹⁹ *Le Monde* 27 juillet 1979.
- ²⁰ *France-Soir* 2 septembre 1986; *Libération* 2 septembre 1986.
- ²¹ *Le Monde* 2 septembre 1986.
- ²² *Ibid.* 25 août 1989.
- ²³ From Paris, New Caledonia lies around 18,000km away, and French Polynesia is over 17,000km distant.
- ²⁴ IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.36.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* p.33.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁷ IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.83.
- ²⁸ Wallis had 8,973 inhabitants in 1990, compared to 4,732 in Futuna. INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna* p.10.
- ²⁹ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 décembre 1986, 13 décembre 1986.
- ³⁰ IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.37.
- ³¹ Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.183.
- ³² For the history of this emigration, see Jean-Claude Roux: "Migration and Change in Wallisian Society" in R. Shand (ed.): *The Island States of the Pacific and Indian Oceans: anatomy of development* pp.167-176.
- ³³ In 1983 there were 12,174 Wallisians in New Caledonia, and 12,102 in Wallis and Futuna. INSEE: *Territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et Dépendances. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 avril 1983* p.61; INSEE: *Territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 février 1983* part 1 p.31.
- ³⁴ IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1982. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.9.
- ³⁵ Frédéric Angleviel: *L'archipel de Wallis. Problèmes d'une économie insulaire* p.34.
- ³⁶ IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1982. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.17.
- ³⁷ Angleviel: *L'archipel de Wallis* p.34.
- ³⁸ INSEE: *Territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna* part 1 p.31. Karl Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" in A. Ali & R. Crocombe (eds.): *Politics in Polynesia* p.14.

- 39 INSEE: *Territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna* part 2 p.26.
- 40 No statistics were compiled for the 1983 census concerning the number of indigenes engaged in unpaid labour, owing to the difficulty of quantifying what is considered to be 'work' in the tribal milieu.
- 41 Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" p.14.
- 42 Mathieu: *Les DOM-TOM* p.178.
- 43 John Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" In R. Aldrich (ed.): *France, Oceania and Australia: past and present* p.93; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.183.
- 44 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1987. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.23, *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.35.
- 45 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1987. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.23, *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.32.
- 46 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.35.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Ibid. p.34.
- 49 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1987. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.22.
- 50 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.34.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1987. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.22.
- 53 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.33.
- 54 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.34.
- 55 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1987. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.16.
- 56 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.182.
- 57 *Le Monde* 28 avril 1981.
- 58 Ibid. 24 mars 1982.
- 59 Ibid. 15 octobre 1978.
- 60 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.190.
- 61 Ibid. p.179; Rensch "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" p.12.
- 62 See Jean-Claude Roux: "Pouvoir religieux et pouvoir politique à Wallis et Futuna: une coexistence difficile depuis 1835" in *Bulletin de la société d'études historiques de la Nouvelle-Calédonie* no.75 pp.13-30.
- 63 Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" p.108; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.180.
- 64 "Loi no.61-814 du 29 juillet 1961 conférant aux îles Wallis et Futuna le statut de territoire d'outre-mer" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 30 juillet 1961 p.7019.
- 65 Brial, as well as Senator Papilio, are of royal lineage, a source of prestige in local society. Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" p.13.
- 66 *Le Monde* 15 avril 1987; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.188.
- 67 *Le Monde* 15 avril 1987.
- 68 Under article 8, the Superior Administrator has very broad powers. He can "proclamer l'état d'urgence dans les conditions prévues par les lois et décrets, et d'une façon générale, prendre en toutes matières les mesures qu'il juge devoir être prises d'urgence et être nécessaire à la bonne marche des institutions locales, à la protection des citoyens et de leurs biens, à la sauvegarde des personnes, de l'économie locale ou des libertés." "Loi no.61-814 du 29 juillet 1961 conférant aux îles Wallis et Futuna le statut de territoire d'outre-mer" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 30 juillet 1961 p.7019.
- 69 The conservative daily's headline on the incident read: "Poussée de fièvre à Wallis. Le F.L.N.K.S. et les nostalgiques de l'administration socialiste tentent de déstabiliser l'île." *Le Figaro* 30 octobre 1986.
- 70 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 31 octobre 1986.
- 71 Ibid. 30 octobre 1986.
- 72 Ibid. 15 décembre 1986.
- 73 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 11-17 mars 1993.
- 74 *Pacific Report* 8 March 1993.
- 75 *Radio France Internationale* 5 octobre 1993; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 5 octobre 1993, 7 octobre 1993.
- 76 Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" p.92.

- 77 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 décembre 1986.
- 78 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 juillet 1986 p.2970.
- 79 IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1982. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.7.
- 80 Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" p.96.
- 81 Australian Department of Foreign Affairs: *Wallis and Futuna* p.7; Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" p.13.
- 82 Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" pp.13-14; IEOM: *Rapport d'activité 1982. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.7.
- 83 For example, territorial self-sufficiency in food was still being presented as an important development objective in 1988. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 14 mars 1988.
- 84 *Le Monde* 28 août 1981.
- 85 See the comments of René Rouquet, government reporter on DOM-TOM policy, about Wallis and Futuna: *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 6 novembre 1982 p.6795.
- 86 *JO. Annexe aux débats de l'Assemblée Nationale no.960* 8 octobre 1987 p.45.
- 87 *Ibid.* p.46.
- 88 Alain Huetz de Lemps: *L'Océanie française* p.83; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6 octobre 1987.
- 89 Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" p.94; Rensch: "Wallis and Futuna: total dependency" p.15.
- 90 John Connell: "Wallis and Futuna Workers in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides" in C. Moore, J. Leckie & D. Munro (eds.): *Labour in the South Pacific* p.137. No mention is made, either in the 1983 or in the 1990 territorial census, of the number of Wallisians who had returned from Vanuatu since 1980, although the 1990 territorial census listed 141 Wallisians as having been born in Vanuatu or the New Hebrides. INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna. Principaux résultats du recensement 1990* p.19.
- 91 See the comments of Petelo Takatai, the Vice-President of Wallis and Futuna's Territorial Assembly, in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 8 février 1985.
- 92 *Ibid.* p.136; Ounei: *For Kanak Independence* pp.11-12; McCallum: *Caldochie - a state of mind?* pp.23-24.
- 93 *Le Monde* 18 mai 1985; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 17 mai 1985; Doisy: *Chronique des années de cendres* pp.169-170.
- 94 *Le Monde* 30 juin-1 juillet 1985.
- 95 *Ibid.* 29 avril 1988.
- 96 For examples, see *ibid.* 9 mai 1985; Doisy: *Chronique des années de cendres* pp.207, 217.
- 97 In February 1985, Brial stated in the National Assembly: "S'agissant de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, vous me permettez de vous faire part de ma déception puisque le statut «Lemoine» [...] n'a été ni respecté ni appliqué par le Gouvernement [...]. Celui-ci a préféré imposer le statut «Pisani» qui a instauré la violence et la haine et retiré toute compétence aux élus." *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 6 novembre 1985 p.3941. Cf. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 février 1985. Papilio described the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute as "une soupe mal préparée". *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 10 août 1985.
- 98 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 17 mai 1985; *Le Figaro* 11 janvier 1985.
- 99 *Le Monde* 28 juin 1985.
- 100 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 7 mars 1986.
- 101 *Ibid.* 2 septembre 1986.
- 102 *JO. Annexe aux débats de l'Assemblée Nationale no.960* 8 octobre 1987 p.47.
- 103 *Le Monde* 30 décembre 1986.
- 104 *JO. Annexe aux débats de l'Assemblée Nationale no.960* 8 octobre 1987 p.47.
- 105 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 31 juillet 1986; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 1 août 1986.
- 106 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 décembre 1986.
- 107 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.29 September 1983 p.32387.
- 108 *Ibid.* vol.30 December 1984 p.33285.
- 109 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 16 mars 1987.
- 110 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.34 March 1988 p.35779; *Le Monde* 28 juin 1985.
- 111 No local PS candidate participated in the legislative elections of 1986.
- 112 "Conseil Constitutionnel: Décision no.88-1096" in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 24 novembre 1988 p.2708.

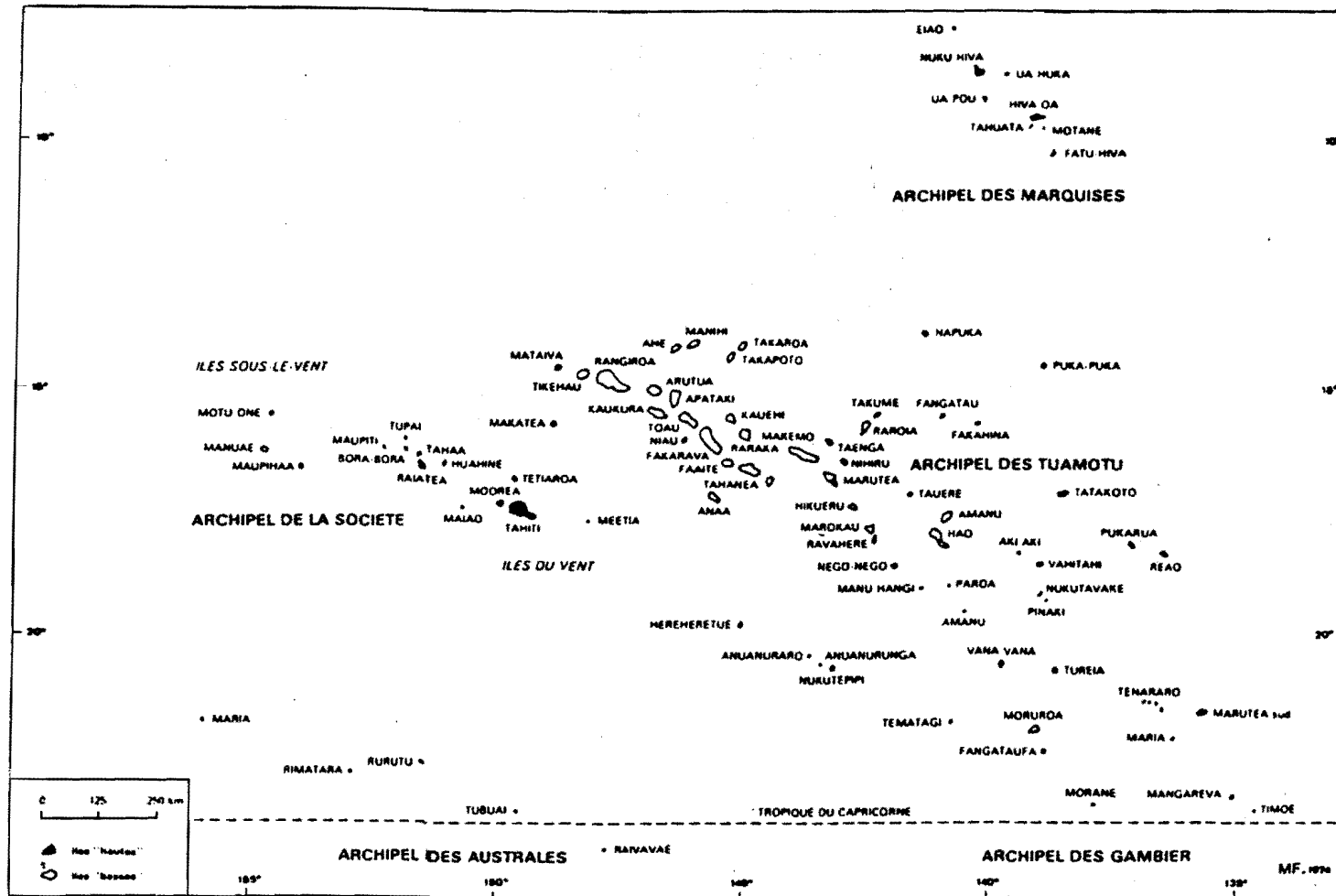
- 113 Of 5,902 valid votes, Gata received 3,390, Brial 2,411 and Maisuèche 101. *Le Monde* 23 mars 1993.
- 114 The PS received 2,659 votes, and the UDF/RPR 1,994, of 4,847 votes cast. In the European elections of 17 June 1984 the PS had received 799 votes, and the UDF/RPR had gained 4,268, of 5,179 votes cast. *Le Monde* 21 juin 1989.
- 115 Ibid. 27 mars 1992.
- 116 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 10 mai 1989.
- 117 Ibid. 2 septembre 1992.
- 118 *Le Monde* 26 mars 1992.
- 119 In 1982, two Wallisian RPCR Territorial Councillors, Marie-Paul Serve and Petelo Manuofuia, left the party to become independents, but they did not manage to consolidate an enduring Wallisian party. Connell: *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* p.300.
- 120 *Le Monde* 10 juin 1989.
- 121 Connell: "Wallis and Futuna: stability and change" p.109.
- 122 *Le Monde* 4 janvier 1990, 2 février 1990.
- 123 Michel Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale: la politique de la France dans le Pacifique Sud* p.51.
- 124 Ibid. p.50.
- 125 *Le Monde* 25 août 1989.
- 126 Ibid. 3 août 1990.
- 127 Ibid. 16 juin 1991.
- 128 Ibid.
- 129 Ibid.
- 130 *Fiji Times* 4 August 1992; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 2 août 1992.
- 131 *Islands Business* April 1993 p.31.
- 132 F. Luchaire & G. Conac: *La Constitution de la République française* p.1303.
- 133 See for example Kamilo Gata in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 novembre 1989 p.4802; and Papilio in *Le Monde* 30 novembre 1990.
- 134 *Le Monde* 17 avril 1993.
- 135 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.13; *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.14.
- 136 Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* p.51.
- 137 INSEE: *Résultats du recensement de la population dans les territoires d'outre-mer. 15 février 1983. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.34.
- 138 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.12.
- 139 IEOM *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.14.
- 140 In February 1990 cyclone Ofa caused an estimated 52MFF worth of damage in Wallis and Futuna. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.7.
- 141 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* p.14.
- 142 Ibid. p.7; IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Wallis-et-Futuna* pp.8, 39.
- 143 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Wallis-et-Futuna* pp.26-27.
- 144 Ibid. pp.19-20.
- 145 Ibid. p.24.
- 146 Ibid. p.32.
- 147 This was the figure mentioned by the territory's 1991 development proposal, and was still being suggested as desirable by Kamilo Gata in August 1992. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 27 août 1992.
- 148 *Le Monde* 15 avril 1987.
- 149 INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna* p.19.
- 150 Ibid. p.61.
- 151 Ibid. p.25.
- 152 INSEE: *Images de la population de la Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.44.
- 153 ITSTAT: *Recensement de la population de la Polynésie française 6 septembre 1988* vol.2 p.107.
- 154 INSEE: *Données sociales 1990* p.355.
- 155 INSEE: *Images de la population de Wallis et Futuna* p.27.

**Table 33. French Polynesia.
Basic Information**

Land Area:	3,265km ² .
Maritime Zone:	5,030,000km ² .
Population (1988):	188,814.
Average Population Density (1988):	58 inhabitants per km ² .
Currency:	F CFP.
GDP (1989):	281,667MF CFP.
Average GDP per capita (1989):	1,463,205F CFP.
Principal Economic Activities:	Servicing the nuclear testing programme, tourism, pearl farming.
Administrative Status:	French Overseas Territory.
Political Representation:	One Senator in the French Senate. Two Deputies in the French National Assembly.

Source: ITSTAT: *Tableaux Economiques de la Polynésie française.*

Map 7. French Polynesia



Source: Moutoussamy: *Les DOM-TOM* p.84.

4. French Polynesia

[Les îles de] la Polynésie française, ce ne sont pas seulement les vahines, les cocotiers, les plages... La Polynésie, c'est aussi, malheureusement, le chômage, la hausse vertigineuse des prix, la délinquance juvénile, les problèmes du logement [...].

Gaston Flosse, Deputy for East French Polynesia, addressing the National Assembly, June 1980.¹

Paradise's Problems

The stereotype of Tahiti as a South Seas paradise, much cherished still in metropolitan France and elsewhere, stands as one of the greatest psychological barriers to understanding contemporary French Polynesia's socio-economic difficulties. The eighteenth century voyage to Tahiti by the French explorer Bougainville, and the related essays of his philosophical interpreters Rousseau and Diderot, have exercised a powerful influence on the French imagination. Their contemporaries' anachronistic notion of Tahiti as an idyllic tropical paradise, inhabited by free-spirited noble savages communing with nature, is one that persists two centuries later, as a perusal of any relevant tourist brochure, French or more generally Western, will illustrate. While in the early 1980s few in metropolitan France had any great awareness either of New Caledonia or of French Polynesia,² the minority who knew anything of French Polynesia were likely to have their knowledge based on the myth of a paradisiacal Tahiti and would have found it difficult to believe that there could be much trouble in that supposed paradise.³ As can be perceived from Flosse's observation above, the strength of this paradise myth was such that it had to be ritually debunked in France in the highest quarters.⁴

Romantic myths surrounding French Polynesia persisted into the 1980s. Apart from sporadic and sometimes inaccurate press coverage, few readily accessible sources of information existed through which an interested metropolitan French citizen might gain insights into the contemporary situation of the territory. The bulk of French books relating to French Polynesia concerned anthropology, French exploration and colonisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, or the work of celebrated artistic residents like Paul Gauguin. Compared with the number of works published in the 1980s on New Caledonia's political evolution, little appeared on the situation of French Polynesia.⁵ Although in October 1987 metropolitan French press accounts of a Papeete riot, looting, and the declaration of a state of emergency on Tahiti brought about the spread of the realisation in Paris that all was not well there, French Polynesian socio-economic problems were not subjected to the same level of public scrutiny and political debate in metropolitan France as the New Caledonian troubles were in the 1980s.

An awareness of the issues facing French Polynesia necessarily existed in the offices of the Ministry of the DOM-TOM in the rue Oudinot and among the leadership of the major French political parties. As Minister of the DOM-TOM, Bernard Pons was questioned in the National Assembly on the cause of the riot and looting in October 1987 and admitted that the incident was a symptom of increasing social problems.⁶ A labour dispute between the port authority and dockers had escalated out of control, presenting to the poorer Polynesian residents of Papeete the opportunity to ransack the central business district. In the 1970s, thanks to economic prosperity encouraged by the presence of the nuclear testing programme, there had been almost full employment for those living outside subsistence tribal economies, but this circumstance was short-lived. The unemployment rate among those considered to be past or

present members of the paid workforce was 3.8% in 1977. Population increase resulted in an increasing imbalance between the number of young locals entering the employment market and the number of jobs available. By 1983, the general unemployment rate was 11.2%. By 1988 11,430 people were jobless, the equivalent of 15% of the territorial workforce.⁷ Polynesians, who constituted the least qualified segment of the population, were the ethnic group worst affected by unemployment. In 1988 the Polynesian unemployment rate was 10.5%, compared to 3.1% among local Europeans. Around 80% of the total number of unemployed were Polynesians aged from 15 to 34 years of age.⁸ Earlier, in May 1987, Pons had reacted to the plight of the Tahitian poor by touring some of Papeete's "quartiers insalubres",⁹ although the reform prescriptions he proposed were inadequate to forestall the looting and destruction of the October riot. PS leaders, from Mitterrand down,¹⁰ had similarly shown an awareness of the social problems to be found in French Polynesia without having introduced reforms capable of overcoming them.

Since the arrival at Papeete in March 1962 of the advance guard of the testing programme,¹¹ all aspects of territorial administration had been subordinated to the establishment and running of the CEP, which was instrumental in transforming the local economy. The advent of the CEP, accompanied by an influx of state capital, and increased employment opportunities for French Polynesians, resulted in an unprecedented level of territorial economic prosperity. But this event also aggravated social inequalities and economic imbalances in French Polynesia. Ongoing government support for nuclear deterrence has acted as a barrier to the resolution of the socio-economic problems stemming from the presence of the CEP. In the absence of any willingness to remove the CEP, ministers in Paris have been incapable of significantly diminishing the disparities created by its presence.

In the 1980s there was no ideological debate concerning French Polynesia between the PS, the UDF and the RPR over the application or validity of concepts such as 'French colonialism' or 'indigenous liberation' as there was with New Caledonia. Partly this difference was due to the absence of a substantial local Polynesian nationalist party pushing for self-determination, although party political considerations in Paris should not be ignored. While actively exercising their acceptance of the maintenance and modernisation of the French nuclear deterrent, Socialist Governments in the 1980s felt disinclined to address the detrimental socio-economic consequences of the presence of the CEP, or decolonisation issues as they might concern French Polynesia. At variance with their willingness to proclaim the deleterious heritage of French colonialism in New Caledonia, they avoided applying such debate to French Polynesia. Socialist talk of self-determination issues outside the New Caledonian context might have encouraged Polynesian nationalist political agitation which could have posed a threat to the activities of the CEP. France had already been constrained to relocate its nuclear testing facilities from Reggane in the Sahara after Algeria became independent.¹² A repeat performance in French Polynesia would have been far from desirable.

To understand the political issues which faced French Governments from 1981, it is necessary to examine the combination of developments, notably the defeat of indigenous nationalism in the 1950s, and the installation of the French nuclear testing programme, which determined the political landscape of the territory in the 1980s. The necessarily brief overview which occupies the rest of this section covers the islands' economic, social and political history from 1945 to 1980 and offers a backdrop to the reform and development efforts of French Governments since 1981.

Although with regard to the careers of their indigenous nationalist movements, the experiences of French Polynesia and New Caledonia differed, the histories of these two TOM since World War II do offer points of comparison. A number of parallels can be drawn in the institutional evolution of

the two territories from 1946 until the late 1970s, particularly in the fields of party politics and statute reform. From 1945 to 1981 both territories became more economically and administratively dependent on metropolitan France.

In October 1946 French Polynesia, until then known as the *Etablissements français de l'Océanie*, became a TOM at the same time as New Caledonia. The arrival of the UC on the New Caledonian political scene in the 1950s was concurrent with the beginning of Tahitian party politics in the years immediately following World War II. Central to this latter development was Pouvanaa a Oopa, a charismatic demi who had fought for France in World War I, worked as a blacksmith in Papeete, and founded the first Tahitian political party.¹³ The year after his election as a Deputy in the National Assembly in 1949, Pouvanaa founded the RDPT. Initially the RDPT was, like the UC in the 1950s, a reformist party which aimed to further local autonomy under the Fourth Republic. Unlike the UC, which worked to improve the lot of both indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants, the RDPT specifically promoted the interests of the indigenous population. The RDPT received some encouragement on 22 July 1957, when after bureaucratic delays, the 'loi-cadre Defferre' was applied to the territory, a year after its application in the other TOM. The law created a Government Council elected by members of the Territorial Assembly, although the French Governor presided over the body and had power of veto over its decisions. Of more lasting significance was the reform which five days later gave the territory a new name: "Polynésie française".¹⁴

Far from all of the French Polynesians were content to stay French. By 1958 the more radical members of the RDPT, including Pouvanaa, had become dissatisfied with the Defferre law because under it the Governor retained executive control of the territory, and because the Government Council was deemed too restricted in its powers. Pouvanaa and his followers abandoned the notion of promoting reform within the French Republic and advocated the foundation of an independent Tahitian Republic. The RDPT split over the question of sovereignty. Certain RDPT members who opposed independence sided with the UTD-UNR, the local conservative coalition formed in 1958, and campaigned for a 'yes' vote in the September 1958 referendum on adherence to the fledgling French Republic. French Polynesia was the only part of the French Pacific which gave the option of independence substantial, if minority, backing. Whereas in New Caledonia in September 1958, and in Wallis and Futuna in December 1959, 2% and 6% of valid votes respectively were for independence, in French Polynesia, the pro-independence total amounted to 36%.¹⁵ The French Polynesian pro-independence vote of September 1958 constituted a percentile level of support slightly greater, for example, than the combined percentage of the vote obtained by Kanak parties in the New Caledonian regional elections of September 1985. (Table 8)

The advent of the Fifth Republic posed setbacks for the RDPT, as it did for the UC. Neither party fared well in the face of hostile Gaullist governments in Paris. De Gaulle was far less sympathetic to the RDPT than he was to the more moderate UC. The nationalist movement founded by Pouvanaa declined following his controversial conviction on circumstantial evidence on 28 October 1959, supposedly for inciting insurrection.¹⁶ His sentence of eight years in prison in metropolitan France and 15 years banishment from French Polynesia decapitated the RDPT and left its members divided over whether to persist in advocating sovereignty or to moderate the party line. Pouvanaa was released from prison in February 1966 and was not permitted to return to French Polynesia until de Gaulle had lifted his expulsion order in November 1968. The parallel between Pouvanaa's falling foul of the law and the experience of Maurice Lenormand, the leader of the UC, was striking. In 1963 Lenormand had his civil rights removed for five years and he received a suspended sentence of one year's imprisonment for alleged involvement in a bombing of the UC's headquarters in April 1958.¹⁷ As in the case of Pouvanaa, what possible motive

Lenormand could have had for committing the act of which he was presumed to be guilty remains puzzling. Was it mere coincidence that these two opponents to Gaullist rule in the French Pacific found themselves convicted on dubious evidence? Whether or not his imprisonment was just, the removal of Pouvanaa from the political scene after the loss of the 1958 referendum marked a major setback for Polynesian nationalism. Although the RDPT and its successors subsequently demanded further self-determination votes for French Polynesia, none were forthcoming owing to the electoral decline of the nationalist vote.

As in New Caledonia, the 1960s and early 1970s entailed an expansion of state control in French Polynesia and an accompanying diminution of the powers of the territorial administration, although the precise forms this reduction assumed in French Polynesia differed from the New Caledonian context. Territorial revenue for French Polynesia, drawn mainly from import tariffs and company taxes in the absence of any personal income tax, dropped in the first years of the Fifth Republic. This trend occurred because of both a decline in local agricultural production, and the exhaustion in 1966 of a major export earner, phosphate from Makatea Island.¹⁸ Faced with declining revenues and finding itself with inadequate funds to run its own services, the territory was constrained to cede to the French State control of its post and telecommunications in 1960, followed by secondary education and vocational training in 1963, and sections of its health service in 1968.¹⁹ The reform of French Polynesian communal administration in 1971 and 1972 reduced further territorial authority and revenues. The five communes in French Polynesia were expanded to a territory-wide network of 45 communes, administered according to metropolitan French law. The territory found itself in the position of having to pass 25% of its revenue to the communes, and lost some of its previous administrative influence over the scattered outer islands. Previously, territorial representatives had exercised influence over the creation of new communes. The establishment and administration of this new network fell under state control.²⁰

French Polynesia found itself host to the CEP from July 1963, when Governor Aimé Grimald authorised its presence in the territory by decree.²¹ In February 1964, Grimald gained the assent of the territorial Permanent Commission to pass control of the atolls of Moruroa and Fangataufa to the CEP for its nuclear tests.²² This consultation did not necessarily imply majority Polynesian support for use of the atolls, the Permanent Commission being a group of five Territorial Councillors who represented the Territorial Assembly between sessions.²³ Oddly, although autonomists held three of the seats on the Commission, there was a majority vote in support of ceding control of the atolls. Resignation to what was considered inevitable, and the hope of compensatory funding for the territory tipped the balance.²⁴

The economic effects of the installation of the CEP were felt rapidly. By 1964, CEP expenditure in French Polynesia was four times the size of the territorial budget.²⁵ Total French military activity in the islands had amounted to 5% of GDP in 1961, before the arrival of the CEP. By 1966, CEP and related military activities accounted for 76% of the greatly expanded French Polynesian GDP.²⁶ 1966 represented the peak of this trend. From that year, although the total expenditure of the CEP and the military steadily rose, as a percentage of GDP it declined. This percentile fall reflected lower military expenditure after the construction of the facilities necessary for the test programme, and growth in the tertiary sector of the French Polynesian economy. In 1971, the figure represented 33% of GDP. By 1980, it had declined further, to 21%.²⁷

French Polynesia's already declining agricultural production diminished further as the presence of the CEP created job opportunities for local Polynesians in the secondary and tertiary sectors. Commercial copra production, the main territorial export after phosphate until 1966, fell from more than 25,000t in 1964 to 7,500t by 1968.²⁸ Here the installation of the CEP was not the sole factor in the decline: the falling number of available workers for

harvesting coincided with falling market prices, not only for copra but also for vanilla. By 1980 in real terms French Polynesian copra exports were worth half as much as their 1970 market value. Vanilla production fell from 28t in 1970 to under 2t 12 years later, and its value declined from 47MF CFP to 13MF CFP.²⁹ Overall, French Polynesian agricultural exports declined in tonnage from the early 1960s. In 1960, they amounted to 24,365t. By 1980 the total was 11,910t.³⁰ Production in some areas ceased altogether in this period. Commercial coffee production came to an end in 1964, as did that of coconut by-products. Some diversification of agricultural exports occurred, although it was not of great importance. Fresh fruit exports, for which no details were listed before 1973, fell from 149t that year to 93t in 1980.³¹

Aquaculture constituted a growth sector for the French Polynesian economy from the 1970s, but was of far less importance than revenue received as a result of the CEP's presence. In the 1960s, the future of aquaculture did not look promising. At that time mother-of-pearl had been the only important export derived from territorial waters, and its production was also affected by the same factors that lay behind the decline in agricultural production.³² Shell exports collapsed from 645t in 1960 to 9t by 1981.³³ This decline was compensated for by the rapid expansion in pearl exports. In 1972, when the first record of significant exports was made, pearls accounted for 1.56kg. By 1981 total pearl exports were 86.53kg.³⁴ Pearls represented the only export success of the period. Otherwise by 1981 local commercial exploitation of territorial maritime resources was minimal. As in the other Pacific TOM, local fishing operations were small-scale and devoted to local consumption, while deep sea fishing was the domain of foreign trawlers operating on fishing licenses from the Territorial Government.

The demographic effect of the installation of the CEP was to draw workers and their families to Papeete. Dockers were required to handle cargo shipped to Moruroa via Papeete, and civilian staff were needed to build, clean and maintain new facilities for CEP employees. The town and adjacent centres (Pirae, Faaa, Arue and Maina) experienced rapid population growth while most islands in the territory experienced a decline in working population. Greater Papeete had 36,514 inhabitants in 1962.³⁵ Fifteen years later, this population had exceeded 78,000.³⁶ By 1977 residents in this urban conglomeration represented 83% of the population of Tahiti, and 57% of the total French Polynesian population.³⁷ Other arrivals, personnel for the test programme and its various support services, came from further afield than the outer islands. As in New Caledonia during its nickel boom, European immigration also occurred during the French Polynesian period of economic expansion. In 1962 there were around 2,500 Europeans working on Tahiti. By 1971, there were around 7,500.³⁸ Immigration from the 1960s did not tilt the ethnic balance in French Polynesia to the extent that it did in New Caledonia. Although defining ethnic origin in French Polynesia was more problematic than in New Caledonia due to the high degree of interethnic mixing in the former, official figures listed full Polynesians as representing 65.63% of the territory's population in 1977. Among others, full Europeans accounted for 11.14%, and full Asians for 5.36%. The remainder were demis of mixed ethnic origins.³⁹

Although the indigenous population of French Polynesia had not lost its demographic preponderance as New Caledonian Melanesians had, Polynesians had become socially and economically marginalised. The decline of the rural economy had eroded the value of traditional skills. Urban living on Tahiti gave rise to a cash-based consumer lifestyle which was novel to the bulk of the indigenous population. Moreover the Polynesian ability to succeed in this consumer society was lower than that of other ethnic groups. Polynesians looking for work in Papeete found their career options restricted by their limited French education and, frequently, by their lack of fluency in French.⁴⁰ Management positions in the secondary and tertiary sectors tended to be the

domain of metropolitan French, Asians or demis, with Asians notable for their success in business.⁴¹ In 1988, these groups were disproportionately highly represented in management posts in the secondary and tertiary sectors. Europeans were the principal income earners for around 20% of the total number of households that year. However this 20% comprised 72.9% of households depending on income from people employed in liberal professions, 42.6% from those in middle management positions, and 27.3% of incomes from businesspeople and company directors. Conversely, while full Polynesians were the principal income earners for 58% of the number of households in the territory, they represented 81.7% of households depending on agriculture as the main source of income, 36.5% in the field of artisanry, and only 10% of households for which employment in liberal or management posts offered the main source of income.⁴²

While average GDP per capita rose from 7,684FF in 1960 to 51,370FF in 1980,⁴³ there was no evidence to suggest that the benefits of economic prosperity were more evenly spread among French Polynesians than they had been prior to the arrival of the CEP. In 1981 workers on the minimum wage received ten times less than upper management civil servants, while agricultural workers and fishermen received 15 times less.⁴⁴ Polynesians who had relocated to greater Papeete were not as likely as demis or people of non-indigenous origins to enjoy the economic prosperity that the CEP induced in the secondary and tertiary sectors. Those who found work tended to be manual labourers on comparatively low pay, while Polynesian unemployed were forced to live a humble existence in shanty towns on the outskirts of Papeete, a town in the centre of which real estate prices came to exceed those of the Champs Elysées.⁴⁵ The lives of these urban Polynesians were far removed from the tropical Rousseauist idyll that their ancestors supposedly enjoyed. Those who remained in the outer islands faced an economic downturn which forced agricultural activity back to subsistence levels. This return to nature would not necessarily have been as spiritually uplifting for a struggling Polynesian agriculturalist as it might have been for an adept of Rousseau.

From 1962 to 1980, the primary sector workforce dropped from 46% of paid labour to 15%. The secondary sector dropped from 19% to 16%, while the tertiary sector rose from 35% to 67%.⁴⁶ Within this workforce employees of the State and local government held important albeit minority status. In 1977, out of a working population of 42,868, 29,266 were in private sector employment, while 13,537 (31.57%) were in the public sector.⁴⁷ This distribution was different from the work sector balance in Wallis and Futuna, a sign of the importance of local commerce, and of the existence of a level of light industry and manufacturing which were absent in Mata Utu.

Tourism was far more developed in French Polynesia than in Wallis and Futuna by the early 1980s. The opening of an international airport at Faaa in October 1960⁴⁸ had broken down territorial isolation and enabled easier access for tourists, who had previously arrived by boat. Just before the CEP engulfed the territorial economy, tourism had expanded to become the largest economic sector by income in French Polynesia by 1964.⁴⁹ Tourist arrivals increased from around 700 in 1957 to nearly 30,000 by 1968, and 84,615 by 1974.⁵⁰ The territory's trump card was its global reputation as a South Seas paradise, but tourism was not without its difficulties. A stay in paradise was expensive. Travellers were discouraged by astronomical prices in Tahiti,⁵¹ the consequence of a society largely dependent on imported goods, and of its distance from affluent northern hemisphere countries. These factors posed psychological and economic barriers even in the age of jet travel.

Although the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM had presented high official hopes for tourism development at the end of the 1970s, a gap between expectation and reality had already developed by that stage. The Sixth Plan for the DOM-TOM (1971-1975) enthusiastically projected that by 1975, tourism

growth would be such that 7,000 hotel rooms would be available, workers in the tourist sector would number over 7,000, and 240,000 tourist arrivals would take place annually.⁵² In 1975 these targets were far from attainment: hotel rooms numbered a little over 2,000, there were fewer than 2,000 people working in the tourism 'industry', and tourist arrivals that year numbered 88,959.⁵³ Although not living up to the excessive optimism of the Planning Commission in the 1970s, tourism was an expanding area of the territorial economy, and the Eighth Plan continued to view it optimistically.

For the islands the 1960s and 1970s involved years of growing financial as well as administrative dependence on metropolitan France. With the arrival of the CEP came an influx of several thousand metropolitan French scientists, military and general support personnel who expected the same consumer lifestyle as they were used to in Europe. The number of small businesses in Papeete expanded rapidly to soak up the disposable incomes of CEP employees, and those of the locals privileged to be a part of the new economic prosperity. From 1963 to 1965, the number of retail outlets in Papeete rose from 359 to 559.⁵⁴ Consumer goods were imported in far greater numbers than had been the case at the beginning of the 1960s. The value of imported mechanical and electrical goods alone increased from 437MF CFP in 1960 to 9,098MF CFP by 1968.⁵⁵ Imported foods rose from 445MF CFP in value in 1960 to 2,381MF CFP in 1968.⁵⁶

These imports, along with all the construction materials imported for CEP facilities and new housing in the territory, helped finance the territorial administration. Even before the arrival of the CEP, in the absence of personal income tax, import tariffs had been the main revenue earner for the territorial administration. In 1979 Flosse pithily and accurately characterised the relation between increased imports and the territorial government's fiscal health: "Ici, plus on importe et mieux on se porte."⁵⁷ Although the availability of imported goods stifled local production, raised retail prices and contributed to generally increased living costs, tariffs on those products represented a funding lifeline that territorial politicians were reluctant to sever for want of any other politically acceptable means of raising territorial revenue. As in New Caledonia, personal income tax was the *bête noire* of local salary earners, and had been traditionally despised by them as an infringement of personal liberty. Any territorial administration which dared impose it faced tumultuous opposition from business interests. A proposal made by Pouvanaa in 1957 to introduce a graduated income tax scheme was one of the developments which brought about the mobilisation of a conservative front against him in the last months of the Fourth Republic.⁵⁸

French Polynesia was far from self-sufficient before the arrival of the CEP; it has become more dependent since then. In particular the ongoing decline of local agriculture left its mark. In 1960, the territory imported 37.0% of its food requirements. Twenty years later, it was importing 51.5% of its food.⁵⁹ Increased food demands, along with those for consumer goods and construction materials, caused the coverage rate of imports by exports to slide dramatically from 83.0% in 1960 to 24.0% in 1980.⁶⁰ The greater part of French Polynesian external trade stayed with France. In 1980, 47.6% of territorial imports originated from France, which received 69.6% of French Polynesian exports.⁶¹ Assuming it was possible, the trade integration with the Pacific region stressed by the Eighth Plan stood at best as a distant prospect. Products from Australia, New Zealand and Japan accounted for 11.9% of territorial imports in 1980, while products from various other countries in the region were included in the 4.8% of imports categorised as coming from "other countries".⁶²

Although the foundation of the CEP brought about an influx of metropolitan French funds and encouraged prosperity, it brought with it various troubles. In the late 1970s, French Polynesia displayed all the traits of dependence outlined in the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM: declining territorial

self-sufficiency in food, an absence of productive diversity in agriculture and light industry, an external trade balance tilted towards a high level of French imports and exports, and low levels of trade with nations in the Pacific basin. This was the situation as Giscard d'Estaing had inherited it in 1974, and it was unchanged when Mitterrand assumed the presidency in 1981.

The nascent local nationalist movement in French Polynesia saw the prospects of independence recede under the Fifth Republic. The islands' economic fortunes became more tightly linked with France through the continued presence of the French military and their nuclear programme. Local Polynesian autonomists remained hostile to the nuclear presence in their territory, but they realised that should the CEP ever cut back or halt its testing activities, the effects could be detrimental to French Polynesia's economic well-being. The increased French presence had a politically stifling effect on the local independence movement both because the territorial economy had become increasingly dependent on the State and because the CEP had created an era of financial prosperity for French Polynesia. The message that continued ties with France were beneficial for local Polynesians was easier to promote as a result. Consequently, electoral support for independence faded by the early 1970s, when an autonomist coalition government lost power to a coalition of Gaullists and independents.⁶³

Campaigning by the RDPT for autonomy had been cut short by de Gaulle's dissolution of the party. The *Journal Officiel* of 6 November 1963 carried a decree of the Council of Ministers, signed by de Gaulle, and Prime Minister Georges Pompidou among others, which banned the party as a threat to law and order.⁶⁴ Thus de Gaulle and his colleagues outlawed a movement which they considered contrary to the national interest. Faced with vehement state opposition from the French President down and a decline in electoral support, the nationalist movement moderated its claims. In the late 1960s, programmes for statute reform aiming to give French Polynesia greater internal autonomy within the French Republic became the new focus for Pouvanaa's followers. The successor party to the RDPT, Here Ai'a (Beloved Land), founded in February 1965 by John Teariki, and Francis Sanford's E'a Api (New Way), founded the same year, retreated from Pouvanaa's pro-independence platform of the late 1950s.⁶⁵ In advocating autonomist policies during their period of coalition rule over the Territorial Government from 1967 to 1972, these two parties returned to the position of the RDPT in the early 1950s.

The modest goal of internal autonomy was more acceptable to the French Polynesian electorate than independence had been. Teariki and Sanford attracted broad support from voters who accepted internal autonomy as a path towards diminishing Parisian dirigisme in the territory. French Governments under the presidencies of de Gaulle and Pompidou were unresponsive to autonomist claims. After the election of Giscard d'Estaing in 1974, Paris recognised that statute reform was desirable and began discussions with Teariki and Sanford. Negotiations under Giscard d'Estaing were hesitant and protracted. Sanford and Teariki only made real headway in negotiations after their coalition, the Front Uni pour l'Autonomie Interne, gained a majority in the territorial elections of May 1977. A new statute proposed in 1976 by Olivier Stirn, then Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, was criticised by autonomists for giving back too few of the administrative powers which had been lost by the territory under the Fifth Republic. Sanford threatened Stirn with the return of an independence movement should autonomist hopes be disappointed. In exchange for Here Ai'a and E'a Api's support for the UDF, the statute was renegotiated and a new version was promulgated in July 1977.⁶⁶

The new statute replaced the French Governor with a High Commissioner. As was the case in New Caledonia, the High Commissioner held the presidency of the Territorial Government, with a locally elected Vice-President effectively presiding over matters of territorial jurisdiction. Territorial

powers under the statute differed from those under the Defferre law. The territory was to exercise competence over any domain not specifically listed as being that of the State. Although far from undermining the administrative *status quo*, the adoption of the statute was heralded as a great victory by Sanford and Teariki. Giscard d'Estaing and the UDF viewed the reform as the enlightened fulfilment by Paris of Polynesian demands for internal autonomy. It was envisaged that the new statute, combined with the introduction of development contracts between the State and the territory designed to strengthen the economy and alleviate social disparities, would eventually compensate for the shock caused by the CEP.⁶⁷

As in New Caledonia, the results of the 1981 elections cut short Giscardian reform orientations for French Polynesia. In assuming that the course of territorial reform had been settled for French Polynesia, Giscardians had not counted on the volatility and fluid nature of political life in Papeete. The issue of internal autonomy was far from resolved and from 1980 was adopted with zeal from an unexpected quarter.

Territorial Politics: From Giscard to Mitterrand

Up to this point examination of French Polynesian politics has been limited to a generalised description of two opposing political camps in the post-war period, those of autonomists and conservatives. This necessary simplification has been adopted to avoid becoming sidetracked by the complexities of French Polynesian political alliances from the 1950s to 1970s. However to understand the outwardly puzzling, ever-shifting maze of alliances both within Papeete, and between Papeete and Paris, as well as the influence they had on the implementation of French policy in the territory in the period under examination, closer analysis will be offered of the French Polynesian political scene from 1980.

The presentation of biographical information concerning the key leaders introduced so far is a reflection of the importance of personality politics in French Polynesia. From Pouvanaa to Flosse, the territory's political direction has been heavily influenced by a small number of vigorous figures. French Polynesian political parties tend to be little more than the embodiment of the *mana* of a single man.⁶⁸ Ideological considerations have been subservient to short-term pragmatism as the small group of political personalities with a territorial reputation shifted allegiances in their ongoing struggle for the dominance of political institutions. Consequently French Polynesian political life was inherently unstable, with a plethora of short-lived parties combining into coalitions which rose and fell from election to election. Because of these shifting alliances, politics in French Polynesia have been aptly described as reminiscent of the French Fourth Republic.⁶⁹

There are numerous examples from the 1950s of French Polynesian leaders who have made at least one political volte-face, but the one that best serves as an introduction to the 1980s is the self-transformation Flosse made in the late 1970s. At the time of the territorial elections in 1977, as the leader of Tahoeraa Huiraatira and the major local conservative figure, he ran a campaign which was light in detailed policy, not going beyond generalised support for social reforms, links with France and the strengthening of the economy.⁷⁰ Faced with the arrival of an autonomist majority in the elections, and the Front Uni's coup in gaining statutory reform from Paris, Flosse decided to outflank Sanford and Teariki and take over their policy platform. As neither Flosse nor his party were closely tied to the UDF, he could afford to go a step further than the Front Uni. He accused the Front Uni of having conceded too easily to Paris, and proclaimed that the statute of 1977 failed to go far enough in granting greater autonomy to French Polynesia. By 1980, he had become a "super-autonomist",⁷¹ calling for Paris to create a Territorial Government with its own

Ministers, able to negotiate with foreign powers, and with greater control over local resources.⁷² On 7 March 1980, he tabled a private member's bill in the National Assembly designed to bring about the necessary statute modifications. Like legislative initiatives formulated by Pidjot as Deputy for New Caledonia, the bill did not gain the backing of a majority in the National Assembly. Dijoud did not take Flosse's bill seriously and on 11 May described it as premature.⁷³ Regardless of this lack of interest in Paris, Flosse's position was perfectly in accord with RPR policy stressing some form of decentralisation in the DOM-TOM as the best means towards strengthening their ties with metropolitan France.⁷⁴ Coincidentally, and a consideration that would not have seemed greatly important in 1980, Flosse's "super-autonomist" outlook was not far removed from the decentralisation and "autogestion" orientations of the PS. This coincidence was to determine the shape of relations between Papeete and Paris from 1981. Whereas the defeat of the UDF and RPR by the PS in the elections that year was regarded by the RPCR as a disaster for conservative interests in New Caledonia, in French Polynesia the advent of the Socialists held more ambiguous implications. The "super-autonomist" stance of Flosse was to lead him into a series of statute negotiations with Emmanuelli and Lemoine that durably changed the territorial administrative structure.

In their 1981 electoral campaigns in French Polynesia the major metropolitan French parties and their local advocates reiterated the political positions expounded in the National Assembly debate on the DOM-TOM in June 1980. But a dimension was added to the exposition of these positions by campaigners in French Polynesia, who projected metropolitan French policies through the distorting prism of their own parochial concerns.

The marriage of convenience between the UDF and the Front Uni was perhaps the oddest combination in 1981; it demonstrated that Flosse was not the only French Polynesian leader capable of switching platform. The UDF, with its French Republican origins, and the Front Uni, with its roots in Polynesian nationalism, had converged from drastically different ideological starting points. In the past, autonomist parties had aligned themselves with parties of the French Left rather than with the Centre-Right, in the belief that Socialists would be more sympathetic to Polynesian interests. In the presidential elections of 1965, Teariki had campaigned for Mitterrand against de Gaulle. Nine years later, Teariki and Sanford had both advocated voting for Mitterrand rather than for Giscard d'Estaing, unconvinced that a former Finance Minister of de Gaulle would be any different from his predecessors as President.⁷⁵ Although autonomist campaigning in May 1974 enabled Mitterrand to gain 51.04% of votes cast in French Polynesia in the second round of the presidential elections,⁷⁶ by 1981 the Front Uni preferred Giscard d'Estaing. Whereas in 1974, the French Polynesian Comité de soutien à Giscard d'Estaing had been the creation of a small coalition of independent centrist Territorial Councillors, by 1981 they found themselves rivals of the very autonomists who had campaigned against them on the Comité de soutien à François Mitterrand seven years before. As evidence of the fractious nature of French Polynesian party politics, by April 1981 there were four rival Giscardian support committees, each vying to spread the good word.⁷⁷ Prior to the elections in 1981 the leaders of the Front Uni misread political developments in Paris, acting on the assumption that Mitterrand would lose at national level as he had before.⁷⁸ Their good relations with Giscardian Ministers in Paris should not be ignored either. Having gained various reform concessions from Paris since 1977, the Front Uni campaigned for Giscard, optimistic that his re-election would enable the introduction of further benevolent legislation which would increase autonomist prestige.⁷⁹

On the topic of statute reform, Teariki stated early in April 1981 that Giscard d'Estaing had promised a revision of the 1977 statute should he be re-elected. When questioned in Paris days later concerning this reported promise, Giscard d'Estaing was vague on details, although he indicated that the statute "a

**Table 34. French Presidential Elections, 1981.
French Polynesian Results**

First Round: 26 April

Registered voters	78,496
Votes cast	52,018
Turnout	66.27%
Valid votes	51,036

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing (UDF)	26,241	50.45
Chirac (RPR)	18,323	35.22
Mitterrand (PS)	4,249	8.17
Marchais (PC)	273	0.52
Others	1,950	3.75

Second Round: 10 May

Registered voters	78,519
Votes cast	49,831
Turnout	63.46%
Valid votes	48,771

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Giscard d'Estaing	37,414	75.08
Mitterrand	11,357	22.79

Sources: *Le Monde* 28 avril 1981, 12 mai 1981.

**Table 35. French Legislative Elections, 1981.
French Polynesian Results**

First Round: 21 June

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Registered voters	52,681
Votes cast	29,989
Turnout	56.93%
Valid votes	29,710

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Juventin (UDF)	8,361	27.88
Léontieff (RPR)	7,480	24.94
Vernaudon (Ea Api)	4,814	16.05
Atger (Ia Mana)	4,354	14.52
Others	4,701	15.68

Second constituency (East Polynesia)

Registered voters	26,154
Votes cast	15,241
Turnout	58.27%
Valid votes	15,058

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Flosse (RPR)	8,528	55.95
Drollet (Ia Mana)	2,575	16.90
Porlier (UDF)	1,529	10.03
Others	2,426	15.92

Second Round: 5 July

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Registered voters	52,660
Votes cast	30,546
Turnout	58.01%
Valid votes	29,953

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Juventin (UDF)	15,415	50.46
Léontieff (RPR)	14,538	47.59

Sources: *Le Monde* 24 juin 1981, 7 juillet 1981.

toujours été en faveur d'une plus grande autonomie [...] C'est un commencement et non un aboutissement."⁸⁰ In the same interview, the President confidently stated that the territory had made great progress with socio-economic reforms since 1974 through its development contracts for agriculture, aquaculture and industry, the extension of social welfare coverage, the improvement of the education of French Polynesians, and assistance in the creation of a territorial culture office. Elsewhere he offered to the French Polynesian electorate optimistic observations on the territory's future under a second Giscardian septennate:

Je constate que les progrès se sont accélérés dans tous les domaines où nous [les gouvernements français et territorial] avons engagé ensemble de grandes actions pour l'avenir de votre Territoire. [...] Aujourd'hui il nous reste comme partout beaucoup de travail à faire. [...] Mais nous pouvons construire l'avenir de la Polynésie. Un avenir de bonheur et de paix, suivant nos propres traditions, à condition de disposer de la continuité dans l'action et de la sécurité.⁸¹

Absent from the rare interviews and statements given in 1981 by Giscard d'Estaing on French Polynesia were the detailed, technocratic analyses for which he was renowned. Instead, he traded on vague banalities such as those in the quote above, their underlying message being to keep him in power as better was yet to come.

The urgency of this message intensified after Mitterrand's national showing in the first round of the presidential elections: he came second behind Giscard d'Estaing, in contrast to his third placing in the French Polynesian poll. (Tables 2, 34) In an attempt to harness the largely anti-communist sentiment of the territory's predominantly Christian population, attempts were made to invoke the Red peril which paralleled those of the RPCR in New Caledonia. This was by no means a new ploy; similar scaremongering had been indulged in during the presidential elections of 1974.⁸² After the first round, one of the Giscardian support committees asked rhetorically "G. Marchais peut-il être Ministre des DOM/TOM?" Predicting that a Socialist Government would be hostage to the whims of a minority PC holding the balance of power in the National Assembly, French Polynesian voters were asked by the Comité de soutien à la candidature de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing:

Que ferait donc pour la France pour l'outre-mer en général, pour la Polynésie Française en particulier un gouvernement frappé de paralysie par la volonté du parti communiste? Rien de bon, assurément. Et si les communistes participent au gouvernement, pour nous ce sera le pire.[...] Imaginez que le Ministre chargé de l'outre-mer soit communiste. Quelle politique menerait-il pour la Polynésie française? Que peut-on attendre de lui face à notre peuple qui est profondément religieux? De cela, nous ne voulons pas.⁸³

Such speculation probably influenced local voting patterns. Fear of communism, as well as hope for further Giscardian reforms, may well have contributed to convincing 75.08% of the French Polynesian electorate to vote for Giscard d'Estaing in the second round of the presidential elections. (Table 34) The groundless nature of fears concerning the influence of the PC on the PS has already been discussed in chapter 2. The PC played no role in French Polynesian politics at the time of the 1981 elections, and had never had any significant presence in the islands. Marchais received 0.52% of votes cast in French Polynesia during the first round of the presidential elections, a level of support indicative of the lack of French Polynesian interest in his party platform.

Nor, more significantly, did the PS have a direct presence in French Polynesia at the beginning of the 1980s. A PS/Front Uni alliance could have had major bearing on territorial politics, but the autonomists had sided with Giscard

d'Estaing. Instead, opposing the RPR, which had close associations with Tahoeraa Huiraatira, and the UDF, to which a motley collection of independent and Front Uni committees had adhered themselves, the PS had as its mouthpiece the Maohi nationalist party Ia Mana Te Nunaa (Power to the People). Founded in 1976, Ia Mana differed from the bulk of French Polynesian parties in having a fairly fixed agenda, and less emphasis on personality politics.⁸⁴ Led by a group of young Polynesians who had received tertiary educations in France, and who had absorbed the organisational methods and philosophies of the French Left, Ia Mana led a revival of Polynesian nationalism from the late 1970s, calling for the territory's secession from the Fifth Republic. Yet it was a fledgling party which had yet to gain as wide a level of support in French Polynesia as Kanak nationalist parties did from the 1970s. Like the FI in New Caledonia, in 1981 Ia Mana campaigned for Mitterrand and the PS in the hope that a Socialist Government would bring about radical local change and the recognition of its nationalist agenda.⁸⁵ Some distinction must be made between PS statements and those made by French Polynesian followers of the Socialists. Although Ia Mana was a socialist party in the broader sense of the term, it was not a component of the PS, and it provided its own gloss on PS policy, presenting it to fit Maohi nationalist criteria.

Ia Mana, like the Front Uni, and even Flosse,⁸⁶ professed to be opposed to nuclear testing, but it fudged the issue of Mitterrand's backing for the retention of French nuclear defence and, by implication, nuclear testing in French Polynesia. An Ia Mana party communiqué on 29 April 1981 declared that a vote for Giscard d'Estaing was a vote for the continuation of nuclear testing,⁸⁷ while neglecting to mention Mitterrand's pro-nuclear stance.⁸⁸ That the Mitterrandian policy of ongoing support for French deterrence was no different from that of Giscard d'Estaing and Chirac would have contradicted Ia Mana's electoral slogan: "Avec F. Mitterrand, changer la vie".⁸⁹

Consistent with its youthful leadership, Ia Mana presented itself as the representative of French Polynesian youth, and stressed that Giscardian reforms in the territory were far from having overcome the social disadvantages and poverty of young urban and rural Polynesians.⁹⁰ Ia Mana accused Giscardian liberalism of failing to get to the heart of territorial social inequality, and promoted Mitterrand as a President who would install "une autonomie économique" and "un véritable gouvernement interne", as well as who would "lutter contre les privilèges".⁹¹ Mitterrand was portrayed as a potential Socialist saviour for the territory, an image which would prove hard to live up to in the decade which followed.

In this respect, Ia Mana did not vary from the line that Mitterrand himself offered: the image of ambitious, far-reaching, egalitarian reform for French Polynesia. Mitterrand stated that improving the lot of local youth was a priority, along with the reduction of social inequalities and the encouragement of local production to lessen territorial economic dependence.⁹² In a message to French Polynesians issued at the time of his election the new President indicated that things were going to change:

Les Polynésiens, tout particulièrement, savent qu'il faut mettre fin au centralisme excessif et étouffant du pouvoir giscardien. [...] Il faut faire cesser la bureaucratie galopante et envahissante qui empêche la Polynésie de développer son économie et de mettre en place un véritable pouvoir autonome. [...] Il est insupportable que la réforme de 1977, au lieu de donner aux Polynésiens les moyens de prendre en charge le devenir de leur «fenua» [peuple], ait abouti à faire du Conseil de Gouvernement un perpétuel quémandeur de subsides par le tranchement des Conventions.⁹³

These orientations were more reminiscent of the author of *Le Coup d'état permanent* in the mid 1960s rather than the President of the early 1990s. He would have as hard a time living up to his own words as to those of *Ia Mana*.

Although Mitterrand indicated that things were going to change in the islands, that change did not extend to talk of self-determination as it did in New Caledonia. In Papeete, Maohi sovereignty was not a major campaign issue during the elections of 1981. The message promoted by most local parties was that the political path for the territory lay in the promotion of greater administrative autonomy within the Fifth Republic. It was nevertheless evoked on occasion, mainly by *Ia Mana*. On the question of French Polynesian independence, in 1981 Mitterrand was as circumspectly observant of constitutional considerations as he was in New Caledonia's case:

Le parti socialiste reconnaît solennellement le droit des populations de choisir librement les institutions politiques qui leur paraissent les plus adaptées aux solutions locales. Ce droit à l'exercice de l'autodétermination qui découle du droit à la différence et du principe du respect des spécificités de chaque population est inscrit depuis 1946 dans le préambule de la constitution. Le parti socialiste a toujours réclamé l'application de ces droits fondamentaux des populations d'outre-mer, et il a, par avance, proclamé sa volonté de respecter leur vœu.⁹⁴

This statement tied in with Mitterrand's position on New Caledonian independence at that time: if a majority of the electorate in the territory desired independence, then it would be given. In French Polynesia, such a scenario represented a distant and unpopular prospect in 1981. *Ia Mana* supporters were few within the territory. In the territorial elections of 1977, the party received 3.63% of votes cast, inadequate to gain any seats in the Territorial Assembly.⁹⁵ This marginal following for Maohi sovereignty precluded any likelihood that Mitterrand would have to weigh his position on French Polynesian independence as carefully as he had to with New Caledonia in the 1980s.

On the eve of his election in 1981 Mitterrand offered clear observations concerning the issue of French Polynesian statute reform:

Si les Polynésiens estiment qu'il faut améliorer, modifier le statut actuel, je m'engage à le faire en étroite concertation avec tous les partis, avec tous les élus.

D'ores et déjà, j'affirme que l'autonomie interne réelle passe par la libre disposition des ressources du Territoire et par la suppression des pouvoirs exorbitants du Haut Commissaire. Il faut que les Conseillers de Gouvernement aient la pleine responsabilité de la gestion du Territoire, sous la responsabilité d'un des leurs librement choisi.

Ainsi peut s'ouvrir une ère de relations confiantes entre la France et la Polynésie, un développement harmonieux, une plus grande justice sociale, une véritable responsabilité de gestion.⁹⁶

These prescriptions were exactly what Flosse had advocated.

The PS was dissatisfied with its lack of representation in Papeete and made an attempt to establish its own presence in local politics at the time of the presidential elections. Following the accession to power of the Mauroy Government, the Socialists made efforts to establish a branch in French Polynesia. Like its New Caledonian and Wallisian counterparts, the PSP was to have an inglorious career. The main force behind the PSP was Paul Koury, a Guadeloupean dentist of Lebanese origin living in Papeete. He had settled there in 1976 after marrying one of Flosse's daughters, whom he claimed he had subsequently divorced on the grounds of "incompatibilité politique".⁹⁷ At the time of the election of Mitterrand, Guy Penne, one of the new President's advisors, asked Koury to enter French Polynesian politics for the PS. Although founded on 10 May 1981, remarkably it was only after Emmanuelli's first visit

to Papeete in August that the PSP assumed anything other than a paper existence.⁹⁸ Echoing PS plans of broader social renovation at national level, the PSP hovered on the margin of territorial political life into the mid-1980s and then faded away. No PSP candidates were elected to the Territorial Assembly in the territorial elections of 23 May 1982, (Table 36) as the party only gained 2.11% of valid votes.⁹⁹ Equally disappointing to the PS was the marginal score obtained by Koury four months later in the East Polynesia by-election. Polling last, he received 433 votes, 0.27% of votes cast.¹⁰⁰ The PSP did not consolidate a territorial network capable of rivalling those of established local parties, and continued experiencing mediocre electoral results. The participation of the PSP in the territorial and legislative elections of March 1986, (Tables 39, 40) marked its last significant foray into electoral politics. French Polynesian voters had showed no haste to desert established local political parties to follow the Socialist vision. That Koury was an outsider worked against him. Unlike the prominent local politicians of the day he had neither Polynesian ancestry nor a local heritage, considerations which were important elements in gaining the confidence of indigenous voters.

The RPR had already consolidated its presence in French Polynesia via Tahoeraa Huiraatira. The RPR message for French Polynesia during the 1981 elections was more effectively presented than that of either the PS or the UDF. Tahoeraa Huiraatira greeted Pons and organised large rallies for him during his tour of the territory early in April.¹⁰¹ No major PS or UDF representative visited the islands for the campaigns from April to June. Flosse acted as Chirac's mouthpiece in Papeete. Flosse professed scepticism over the likelihood of Giscard d'Estaing revising the statute in the case of his re-election, and took the opportunity to reiterate his "super-autonomist" stance. He stressed that allowing the territory greater autonomy did not entail severing links with France: "Pour Tahoeraa Huiraatira l'autonomie interne, ce n'est pas l'indépendance mais la décentralisation au sein de la République Française".¹⁰² Chirac was in agreement with this sentiment. In April 1981 he declared to *La Dépêche de Tahiti*:

Et de même façon que je suis partisan d'une plus grande déconcentration et d'une plus grande décentralisation au profit des Régions et des départements métropolitains, je suis de la même façon favorable à l'autonomie locale lorsqu'elle concerne la Polynésie Française.[...] Certains, je le sais, craignent que l'autonomie interne soit l'anti-chambre de l'indépendance. Je tiens à les rassurer car ma conviction est que c'est au contraire par l'instauration d'une véritable autonomie locale, garantie de vos franchises, de vos traditions et de votre culture, que pourra être définitivement exorcisé la tentation dangereuse de l'indépendance.¹⁰³

Chirac could lay passing claim to having assisted decentralisation during his period as Prime Minister from 1974 to 1976, when preliminary work had been done on the statute of 1977. French Polynesia would have to await Chirac's appointment as Prime Minister in March 1986 to see the extent to which he would apply these views, by which time they had been overtaken by statute reform under preceding Socialist Governments. His views here contrasted sharply with his later opposition to the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, which he declared was the antichamber to New Caledonian independence. His attitude differed because within the New Caledonian context, greater territorial autonomy offered indigenous nationalists the opportunity to work towards independence, a consideration of little applicability to French Polynesia.

Chirac's view concerning territorial economic policy did not differ from those of the PS or the UDF in broadly following the orientations of the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM. Local productivity should be stimulated in order to reduce territorial dependence on imports. Emphasis was placed on the exploitation of maritime resources and the expansion of tourism.¹⁰⁴ Both Chirac

**Table 36. French Polynesian Territorial Elections
1982**

Territorial Results: 23 May

Registered voters	85,033
Votes cast	60,470
Turnout	71.11%
Valid votes	60,182

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
Tahoeraa	17,787	29.41	13
Here Ai'a	9,451	15.63	6
Ai'a Api	6,829	11.29	3
la Mana	6,522	10.79	3
E'a Api	3,773	6.24	1
Others	16,108	26.64	4

Sources: *Le Monde* 26 mai 1982; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.142.

and Tahoeraa Huiraatira had no opposition to the continuation of the development contracts instituted under Giscard d'Estaing.¹⁰⁵ Chirac foresaw no reduction of the activities of the CEP in the event of his election, considering the nuclear strike force to be France's best means of protecting its independence.¹⁰⁶

While Flosse did not go to the extent of *Ia Mana* in claiming to speak for disadvantaged Polynesian youth, he did on occasion decry local social problems such as unemployment and propose the extension of social welfare assistance.¹⁰⁷ Tahoeraa Huiraatira did not venture so far as to support *Ia Mana*'s proposals for the introduction of personal income tax. It was not opposed to the reform of company taxes and other levies imposed by the territory, but regarded the introduction of personal income tax as justified only as a measure of last resort, and not as a very desirable one.¹⁰⁸ Flosse had convinced the conservative electorate to follow his recently adopted internal autonomy platform, although until 1993 there was no indication that his party was ready to take up *Ia Mana*'s advocacy of personal income tax.

Tahoeraa Huiraatira and the RPR's emphasis on the remedy to social problems such as the wealth gap and unemployment formed the major difference with Mitterrand's general policy for French Polynesia. Concerning the continuation of nuclear testing, and an increase in local autonomy, both Mitterrand and Chirac were essentially in agreement. With regard to development issues, both expressed negative comments on the limitations of Giscardian reforms to date and offered more and better change, although each in his own way. Political rhetoric from the two presidential candidates' local spokesmen tended to conceal these policy convergences.

After Mitterrand's victory in the second round of the presidential elections Tahoeraa Huiraatira reacted with alarm, warning French Polynesian voters of dire consequences. A party declaration issued just after the results were announced predicted that Mitterrand would be dependent on the PC to form a left-wing coalition government, and urged a strong turn-out for the RPR in the coming legislative elections, as only Chirac would be capable of keeping this "coalition socialo-communiste" in check.¹⁰⁹ This call to the polling barricades evoked a limited response during the legislative elections in the islands. (Table 35) In the first round Flosse was re-elected RPR Deputy with 55.95% of votes cast in East Polynesia. The RPR candidate in West Polynesia, Alexandre Léontieff,¹¹⁰ lost a second round run-off with Jean Juventin, the UDF candidate.¹¹¹ A large segment of the French Polynesian electorate was still prepared to back a UDF candidate in spite of Giscard d'Estaing's defeat in the presidential elections. Tahoeraa Huiraatira later discarded any fighting talk after the party had consolidated its territorial representation to the point where it could comfortably negotiate the reforms it had hoped to implement with Chirac as President.

Towards Internal Autonomy

Considering the unstable nature of French Polynesian politics, it is surprising that the evolution of the territorial statute in the 1980s and early 1990s was not accompanied by the series of legislative revisions which New Caledonia underwent. Instead in September 1984, at the conclusion of orderly negotiations marked only by civilised expressions of differences of opinion, the National Assembly unanimously approved a new territorial statute for French Polynesia. This statute survived into the 1990s, outlasting the New Caledonian Lemoine Statute, the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute and the Regional Autonomy Statute. Explanation is offered below of why this should have happened when numerous factors were predisposed against the consensual introduction of a new administrative structure for French Polynesia. Comparison is made between New Caledonian statute legislation and that of French Polynesia from the 1980s to ascertain the degree to which decentralisation measures implemented by Paris

in the two TOM differed. The practical consequences of French Polynesian statute reform are examined, namely the nature and extent of the decentralisation it introduced. Reactions of the major metropolitan French parties to governmental relations with French Polynesia are analysed. Prominent was the moderate dissension between representatives of the Left and Right compared to their pronouncements on New Caledonia.

Following the Socialist victories in the 1981 elections, the representatives of the Front Uni found themselves in political disarray. Once again, they had supported the losing candidate in the presidential elections. By the time of Emmanuelli's visit to Papeete in August 1981, Sanford and Teariki were attempting to ingratiate themselves with the Secretary of State. Sanford stated to Emmanuelli "Je sais que la concertation fonde votre action, que la vraie décentralisation politique, administrative, économique est enfin là; en un mot, que les comportements colonialistes sont révolus."¹¹² Sanford's assessment, insinuating that all which had gone before did not spell true decentralisation, involved a belated disavowal of his earlier promotion of Giscardian reforms. His words were at odds with a declaration he had made three months before following the election of Mitterrand: "Avec Giscard d'Estaing, beaucoup de progrès ont été accomplis sur le plan économique. Maintenant, certains dossiers ayant trait au développement économique risquent d'être remis en question."¹¹³ Sanford and Teariki advocated in August that the Mauroy Government should implement further decentralisation measures in the territory, but that advocacy sat uneasily with the versatile nature of their party allegiance. Flosse used the Front's setbacks to his benefit by pushing to extremes his 'more radical than thou' image. By December 1981, he was calling for an immediate suspension of nuclear testing and an inquiry into its safety.¹¹⁴ This theatrical stance from the RPR Deputy was quite incompatible with traditional Gaullist backing for nuclear testing.¹¹⁵ Nothing came of the proposal, although it did allow Flosse to upstage the Front Uni on its political ground.

Emmanuelli confronted local reform demands by announcing that he was not unopposed to statute modifications, however he considered social and economic change to be of greater importance. As in New Caledonia, he had gained the impression that addressing social inequalities was a more pressing consideration.¹¹⁶ Unlike New Caledonia however, some early contemplation was also to be devoted to statute reform. The Council of Ministers announced after Emmanuelli's return to Paris that a state-territorial working committee would be appointed to examine the statute as well as development planning.¹¹⁷

In August 1981 the Front Uni was best placed to negotiate with Paris, holding majority control over the Territorial Government, but this situation was not to last. On 23 May 1982, the Front Uni experienced major setbacks in territorial elections which brought about the end of its coalition administration. (Table 36) In a campaign involving 398 candidates contesting 30 seats, the cohesion of the Front Uni was marred by defections, dissent, and divisions between its various components.¹¹⁸ After five years in government, the member parties of the Front had not managed to consolidate a collective identity to the point of enabling them to stand on a joint platform. Wishing to retain their respective identities, the Front's three major formations, Here Ai'a, E'a Api and the Mouvement Social-Démocrate,¹¹⁹ ran separate campaigns. Just before the May elections Emile Vernaude, an E'a Api Councillor, resigned from the Front Uni Government to form Ai'a Api (New Land). Sensing an oncoming change in the fortunes of the Front Uni, various figures in Here Ai'a decided to stand as independents.¹²⁰ Tahoeraa Huiraatira did not face such organisational problems. It criticised the disunity and allegedly poor administration of the Front Uni while promoting its campaign slogan: "Mieux gérer la Polynésie".¹²¹ Tahoeraa received enough votes through the proportional ballot to take 13 of the 30 seats in the Territorial Assembly, an increase of three compared with its representation since 1977. The member parties of the Front Uni lost considerable ground: Here

Ai'a held its six seats, E'a Api was reduced from six seats to one, and the Mouvement Social-Démocrate failed to gain any.¹²² Ia Mana and Juventin's Ai'a Api each received three seats.¹²³

The new balance of power left Flosse in a commanding situation, holding command of a unified block, while all opposition was fragmented. He took advantage of divisions among his opponents to form a coalition government with Juventin after the May elections. It was a union which lasted only 110 days before collapsing under the force of personality differences.¹²⁴ In a remarkable but by no means unprecedented volte-face, in September 1982 Flosse then formed a new coalition with Here Ai'a. Flosse and Teariki were as unlikely a couple as Flosse and Vernaudeau, although they negotiated a joint policy platform, the terms of which were sufficiently loose to avoid immediate political differences.¹²⁵ The joint aim of promoting political stability while confronting various socio-economic problems was the sort of stance political groupings of almost any ideological leaning could assent to. This coalition cemented enough stability for the territory to enter into statute negotiations with Paris.

Flosse had to resign as Deputy for East Polynesia in August 1982. His tenure of the posts of Deputy and of Vice-President of the Territorial Government was deemed incompatible by the state judiciary. Tutaha Salmon, a Taheraa Huiraatira Territorial Councillor, and Flosse's proxy for the seat, was elected to the post in a by-election held on 29 August 1982.¹²⁶ While a reduction of his personal responsibilities, the loss of the seat allowed Flosse to devote more time to statute reform.

As with parallel reform in New Caledonia, some consultations concerning the French Polynesian statute had been made under Emmanuelli, however the bulk of the preparatory work was to be completed under Lemoine from March 1983. Thanks to the coalition's majority, and the absence of vehement opposition to statute reform in Papeete, Lemoine was not obliged to arrange round table negotiations *à la* Nainville les Roches for French Polynesian representatives. It became apparent at an early stage that the Mauroy Government was largely prepared to fulfil proposals presented by Flosse for greater territorial self-government.

On 30 June 1983 Flosse met Mauroy at the Hôtel Matignon. Mauroy assured Flosse that he was willing to legislate a statute which would give French Polynesia a Territorial Government with greater responsibilities, and which would extend to permitting it to represent France at international fora.¹²⁷ Negotiations between Lemoine and Flosse had begun on 14 April 1983, aimed at finalising the details of a new form of territorial administration which would establish a Territorial President elected by the Territorial Assembly, and who would lead the Territorial Government rather than the High Commissioner. It was envisaged that the High Commissioner would retain a supervisory role, assuring the legality of local administrative decisions.¹²⁸ Lemoine confirmed these orientations with an official announcement in early September 1983, by which time a draft statute proposal had already been forwarded to the French Polynesian Territorial Assembly.¹²⁹ The draft, prepared in August 1983, reiterated Lemoine's earlier general publicised description of the competences of the Territorial President, the Territorial Assembly and the High Commissioner. The bill proposed that French Polynesia should receive increased control over the French Polynesian EEZ, be allowed to negotiate foreign investment to a value of 55MFF, and to regain control over the first cycle of secondary education. Paris would engage in closer consultation with the territory over international fishing agreements in its EEZ, international air and sea links, and immigration.¹³⁰

This draft met with some criticism in Papeete. Flosse and opposition representatives characterised it as deficient, claiming it did not devolve enough power to the territory. At an assembly session on 21 September 1983, the draft

was rejected. Flosse voiced the objections of the Territorial Assembly to the Constitutional Law Commission in Paris on 6 October.¹³¹ He asserted that the draft did not go far enough in devolving state powers. Flosse obtained an audience with Mitterrand on 19 October 1983 to voice French Polynesian dissatisfaction, but the proposal was tabled as a bill before the National Assembly on 7 December with only minor modifications.¹³² The French Government was constitutionally obliged to consult with territorial representatives, in the same manner as required under the existing New Caledonian statute. The Territorial Assembly had no power of veto over legislation emanating from Paris. Any objections raised in Papeete could therefore be disregarded by the Mauroy Government. Flosse called a special session of the Territorial Assembly on 12 April 1984 to debate what should be done. Here Ai'a Councillors abstained from voting because Juventin, the party's new leader, had announced there was little recourse at territorial level and it would be better for French Polynesian parliamentary representatives to voice local dissatisfaction in Paris. Of the 27 Councillors present, 17 voted for a motion presented by Tahoeraa Huiraatira which called for a rewrite of the statute bill.¹³³

Dissatisfaction expressed in debate in Papeete found no great echo in Paris during parliamentary consideration and promulgation of the bill from May to September 1984. The Senate, dominated by the UDF and RPR, adopted the bill on 17 July. Doing its best to dampen any future claims that the bill might serve as a first step towards independence, the Senate renamed it the "projet de loi tendant à doter le territoire de la Polynésie de l'autonomie interne dans le cadre de la République".¹³⁴ This cumbersome title was rejected by the National Assembly. Upon the completion of the first reading in the National Assembly on 10 May, the bill was passed with 485 votes for and one against.¹³⁵ At its final reading in the National Assembly on 31 July, the bill became law with the unanimous approval of the 481 Deputies voting.¹³⁶ The legislative progress of the statute was not impeded by opposition recourse to the Constitutional Council, as the DOM decentralisation bill had been in November 1982, and as the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute for New Caledonia was to be in August 1985. Nor was the statute to be abandoned by the Fabius Government in the face of rising, violent opposition in the territory, and coordinated opposition attacks in Paris, as occurred with the New Caledonian Lemoine Statute.

The tone of the National Assembly debates over the bill was superficially curious when viewed alongside the parliamentary ruction which accompanied the Lemoine statute bill for New Caledonia. The jeering, abuse, tirades and interjections characteristic of debates on New Caledonia in 1984 and 1985 were absent from statute reform debates on French Polynesia. The contrast between the two was greatest in the debates of the National Assembly on 31 July 1984, when the final reading of the Lemoine Statute for New Caledonia took place just before that of the French Polynesian statute.¹³⁷ Whereas the political future of New Caledonia had become a ball kicked around an ideological football field, proposals for French Polynesia were treated in a calm, orderly manner. Various party speakers voiced reservations about the legislation for French Polynesia, though none of them were prepared to push their reservations to the extent that they had over New Caledonia. In the absence of accompanying talk of self-determination, the granting of greater administrative powers to the French Polynesian Territorial Government was not considered controversial. As no substantial minority backing for secession existed in French Polynesia, the PS and the PC had no grounds for raising the issue of self-determination, while the UDF and the RPR could profess no great objections to reform on the grounds that the Socialists were threatening the unity of the Republic by hastily leading the territory to independence.

Juventin and Salmon took the opportunity the National Assembly debates provided to voice their qualified criticisms of the statute bill. Their

reservations diminished as the bill passed through its three readings, partly because some of their requests for modifications were met, and partly because it became apparent to the two Deputies that so little animosity to the legislation existed among their metropolitan French colleagues that entrenched opposition to it was pointless. Prior to the first reading of the bill, some minor competences had been added to the list of territorial responsibilities.¹³⁸ At the first reading, the Government accepted Juventin's proposal that a state-territorial coordinating committee should be set up to supervise the implementation of the statute.¹³⁹ It also accepted his proposal that the Territorial President should be obliged to submit his list of Ministers to the Territorial Assembly for approval, and that the statute should be characterised as open to future evolution so that territorial powers might subsequently be increased. Juventin was dissatisfied that the territory would not receive control of the French Polynesian EEZ, even though the territory did not have the means to maintain such control.¹⁴⁰ Lemoine had deemed it necessary to cede the territory competence over the exploitation of maritime resources, but not the full control of the EEZ. He argued that such control could not be permitted for legal reasons. International law only recognised the control of the French Republic over territorial waters. Therefore the State would have to retain its responsibilities in this domain.¹⁴¹ Overall though, Juventin had had enough of his requests met to enable him to vote for the statute bill on 31 July.

Salmon declared at the first reading that numerous points remained to be addressed, notably the granting of territorial control over the issue of visas to foreigners staying more than three months in French Polynesia, and the extension of the international standing of the territory by allowing it to negotiate regional accords which it deemed relevant to its interests.¹⁴² By the third reading of the bill, Salmon indicated that he would vote for it, although he remained disappointed that the territory had not been granted greater economic powers, and that the Territorial Government would not have greater autonomy from the Territorial Assembly. In this latter respect he differed from Juventin. He also expressed opposition to articles 10 and 12 of the bill, which limited the number of posts the members of the Territorial Government could hold simultaneously. There was speculation this could be applied detrimentally to Flosse. Flosse, the most likely candidate for Territorial President under the new law, had been elected on 17 June 1984 to the European Parliament on the UDF-RPR list.¹⁴³ Some controversy had been provoked by this article, with the RPR asserting it was a Socialist attempt to limit Flosse's political career. His five-year term of office in Strasbourg might be endangered by these articles if he decided to run for the presidency. At the bill's first reading, PS and PC Deputies held off an RPR and UDF attempt to loosen this restriction, with 317 votes against 112.¹⁴⁴ For Juventin and the UDF this concern constituted a dubious point which had needlessly distracted debate and should be left to the Constitutional Council to resolve.¹⁴⁵ The Constitutional Council ruled in September that the two posts were not incompatible, allowing Flosse to be Territorial President and a European parliamentarian.¹⁴⁶ In any event, this matter did not prevent global RPR acceptance of the statute bill.

On behalf of the RPR, Jacques Toubon expressed approval of the bill, stating that it conformed with his party's aims for decentralisation within the Republic.¹⁴⁷ He described RPR support as "un «oui, mais»", in that the party was opposed to the possible implications of article 10 for Flosse, and because the Mauroy Government had failed to grant greater territorial control over the French Polynesian EEZ. Toubon asserted that the Government had not gone as far as the RPR would have gone in decentralising, a claim which was to be put to the test during Chirac's administration.

The UDF also offered a "oui, mais" in its assessment of the bill. Pascal Clement, speaking for the party, said it supported the bill "mais peut-être avec des arrières-pensées, ou avec des craintes".¹⁴⁸ Echoing arguments applied to

Socialist reforms to New Caledonia, he claimed the bill might follow the precedent of the 'loi-cadre Defferre' of 1956 in bringing French Polynesia closer to independence:

J'ai bien entendu dire, et répéter, que ce statut ne constituait pas une étape vers l'indépendance. Je souhaiterais volontiers le croire, mais je crains que les mêmes mécanismes institutionnels ne produisent les mêmes effets.¹⁴⁹

In fact, the Defferre law had not led French Polynesia to independence, and by the early 1990s, this fear expressed about the new statute remained unfulfilled. Robert Le Foll, a PS Deputy, replied with the observation that the Opposition occasionally tried to make believe that the Socialists were abandoning French Polynesia, but this did not correspond with reality.¹⁵⁰ It was difficult to believe that the Mauroy Government might be attempting to steer French Polynesia into independence when it had negotiated the statute bill with a territorial delegation led by Flosse, a former RPR Deputy, an RPR European parliamentarian and the leader of Tahoeraa Huiraatira. This attempt by Clement to cast doubts on Socialist motives failed, although similar attempts applied to the New Caledonian portfolio would prove more successful in raising a coordinated liberal-conservative reaction in defence of the unity of the Republic. It should be noted that the RPR avoided such arguments in its commentaries on the French Polynesian statute bill, probably conscious of the charges of hypocrisy it would be exposing itself to should it seek to challenge Socialist motives. Had the RPR claimed that the new statute might lead French Polynesia to independence, PS Deputies would have been able to inquire why the party had allowed Flosse, the RPR stalwart in Papeete, to negotiate with the Mauroy Government in the first place. The dialogue between Socialist Governments and Tahoeraa Huiraatira had no equivalent in New Caledonia. There the RPCR stood in opposition to Socialist statute reform because it involved a self-determination vote.

Moderation was likewise a characteristic of the PC reaction to the bill. Jacques Brunhes summed up the Communist position at the first reading of the bill:

Le groupe communiste a examiné ce projet à partir de positions de principe qui sont connues de chacun: tout ce qui peut améliorer la vie des populations de Polynésie, étendre les libertés et accroître l'autonomie de ce territoire a notre soutien. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous voterons ce texte.¹⁵¹

Anti-colonial rhetoric and the championing of indigenous nationalism were not major features of the Communist attitude, either to the bill or to French Polynesia in general. Maohi independence did not receive the same support that Kanak nationalism did when the PC criticised the Lemoine Statute for not guaranteeing Kanak self-determination.¹⁵² The Communist double standard stemmed from the marginal nature of the Maohi nationalist movement, and the fact that its most important exponent, Ia Mana, sympathised with the PS rather than with the PC. The moderation of the PC served to keep the debates on the bill relatively calm. Had it proclaimed itself the mouthpiece of Maohi nationalism, this stance might have raised tempers on the UDF and RPR benches to the level evident in debates over New Caledonia.

Internal Autonomy: Framework and Implementation

Reference by Clement to the statute bill as a possible portent of independence was given in response to the opening speech of Michel Suchod, a reporter for the Constitutional Law Commission. Introducing the bill to the National Assembly on 9 May 1984, he had placed the legislation within the context of Socialist decentralisation under the Fourth Republic, and more recently under the Fifth Republic:

Le texte qui vous est soumis prend en compte les deux principes d'autonomie interne et de décentralisation.

En proposant un régime d'autonomie interne dans lequel les affaires du territoire sont administrées librement par les élus territoriaux, le Gouvernement rappelle son attachement à la libre détermination des peuples, principe que fit prévaloir un autre gouvernement socialiste avec la loi cadre du 23 juin 1956. [...]

En effet, ce projet emprunte au principe de la décentralisation. Le Gouvernement entend appliquer en Polynésie française des règles identiques à celles dont bénéficient les départements métropolitains depuis l'entrée en vigueur de la loi du 2 mars 1982.¹⁵³

Any analogy made between the administrative structure of French Polynesia under the new statute and that of a metropolitan French Department was a loose one. The office of High Commissioner was peculiar to the TOM, although a rough comparison could have been made with the status of the President of the General Council. French Polynesian bodies such as the Government Council and the Territorial Assembly had equivalents in metropolitan Departments in the form of General Councils, although the latter did not have as great a degree of administrative autonomy.

With regard to the departmental reforms of 1982, these did not apply to the TOM. Similarly, communal electoral reform undertaken by Defferre in 1982 had not affected French Polynesian communes. While proportional representation was installed that year for New Caledonian municipal elections, in French Polynesia the old first-past-the-post system was retained. The introduction, with the Territorial Assembly's approval, of proportional representation to communes with more than 10,000 inhabitants was contemplated,¹⁵⁴ but did not happen.¹⁵⁵ The main reason for this lack of change was an unwillingness to radically alter communal regulations which had only been extended to most of the territory at the beginning of the 1970s. In French Polynesia it was the High Commissioner who authorised the application of communal legislation.¹⁵⁶

Suchod's mention of departmental reform in the French Polynesian context presented territorial statute reform as part of a broader Socialist plan for national local government reform and decentralisation. In doing so, he glossed over administrative differences between the TOM and metropolitan French Departments. The description offered by Lemoine of the statute was similarly misleading:

Ce nouveau statut marque une rupture avec les statuts précédents en allant jusqu'au bout de la logique constitutionnelle de «l'organisation particulière» des territoires d'outre-mer, en dotant la Polynésie française de l'autonomie interne.

Cette autonomie interne constitue la reconnaissance par la République de la spécificité de la Polynésie française.¹⁵⁷

While it is true that the statute bill offered greater recognition of French Polynesian specificity, it is doubtful that it represented either a break with preceding statutes or the end-point of territorial administrative particularism. (Tables 37, 38) The main territorial administrative bodies - the High Commission, the Territorial Government, and the Territorial Assembly - were rejigged rather than replaced. The Permanent Commission of the Territorial Assembly was increased from 7 members, to a complement ranging from 9 to 13 members. The territorial Economic and Social Advisory Committee was maintained. An Administrative Tribunal was set up to monitor the legality of territorial legislation. The new statute was a reworking of the one which preceded it, not a new beginning. Nor was the statute necessarily the end of the line for French Polynesian autonomy, as subsequent statute reform has demonstrated.

The final text of the law, referred to as the Internal Autonomy Statute, was promulgated in September 1984.¹⁵⁸ The phrase "autonomie interne", prominent in the first article of the statute, was used to define the administrative standing of the territory:

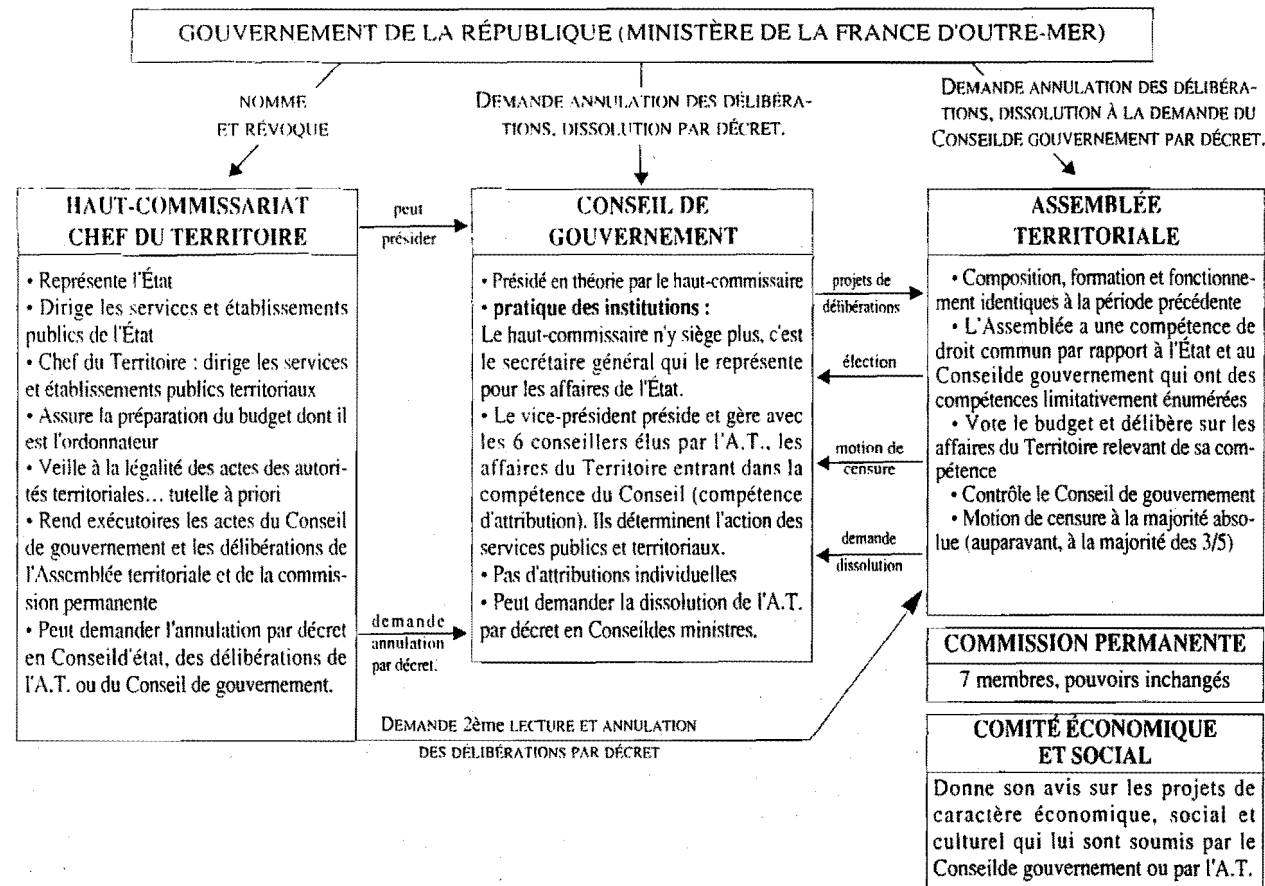
Le territoire de la Polynésie française constitue, conformément aux articles 72 et 74 de la Constitution, un territoire d'outre-mer doté de l'autonomie interne dans le cadre de la République et dont l'organisation particulière et évolutive est définie par la présente loi.¹⁵⁹

Symbolic of its new standing was the granting to the territory under article 1 of an official flag and hymn. These symbols were far from entailing an abdication of French sovereignty. Under article 1 it was additionally outlined that the High Commissioner would hold his traditional authority over the defence of law and order, the respect of French law, and state administration. He was to act as the state watchdog over the legality of the actions of the territorial administration.

The list in article 3 of state domains over which the High Commissioner held authority was still extensive. Overall, he retained most of the responsibilities outlined in the statute of 1977, with the addition of more specific details in some instances. As under the statute of 1977, he exercised authority over territorial foreign relations, immigration, external communications, finance, defence, strategic resources, the maintenance of law and order, state administration, civil law, labour law, communal administration, the second cycle of secondary education and state higher educational facilities. His control over the importation of all arms and munitions was a new detail. Previously, his authority had been limited to military arms. State control over local land, air and sea resources was increased. Article 3 of the Internal Autonomy Statute, while going into more precise detail, confirmed the orientations of article 62 of the statute of 1977 and added a further feature.¹⁶⁰ With the permission of the State the territory would be able to exploit local maritime resources. However existing prerogatives of the territory such as its ability to negotiate fishing accords in its EEZ with foreign powers were not challenged.¹⁶¹

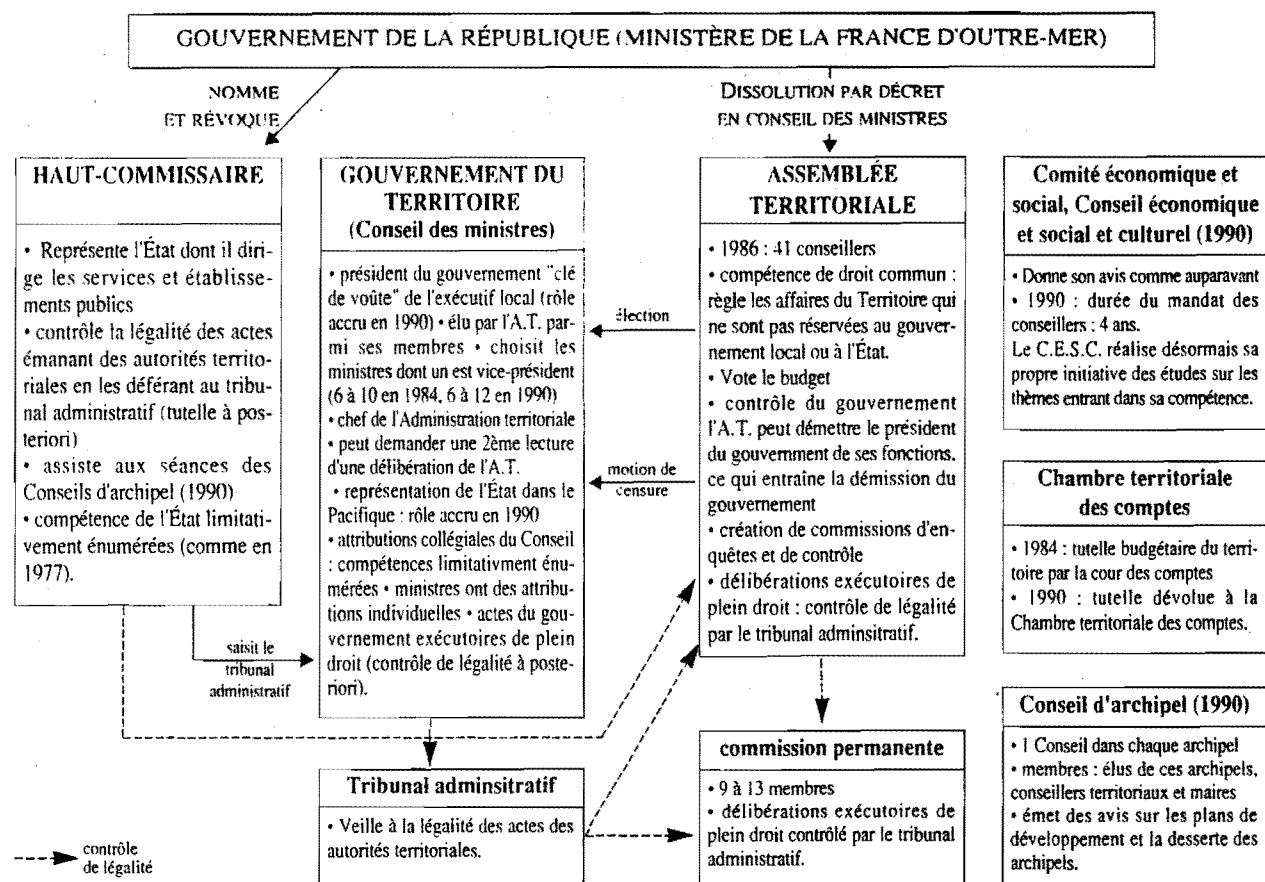
More change was apparent in the High Commissioner's relations with territorial representatives, although he retained considerable authority. Under article 91, the High Commissioner could declare a state of emergency in French Polynesia. Article 92 outlined the High Commissioner's powers over the Territorial Government. He could suspend and defer any decision by the Territorial Assembly or Government to the Administrative Tribunal for examination should he deem it contrary to French law. The Administrative Tribunal was the body which decided the legality of any contested decision. This marked a reduction of the High Commissioner's tutelage over territorial representatives and a degree of alignment with metropolitan French practice. Previously, the High Commissioner had been empowered to annul any decision of the Territorial Assembly or Territorial Council by decree.¹⁶² The relationship between the Territorial Government and the Administrative Tribunal could be compared to that between the Government and the Constitutional Council in Paris. Under the Internal Autonomy Statute the State retained substantial command over any Territorial Assembly which it felt had gone out of control. **Articles 77 and 78 allowed the High Commissioner to assume command of the territorial budget if the Territorial Assembly could not balance its books. Under article 81, the Council of Ministers in Paris could dissolve the Territorial Assembly by decree "lorsque le fonctionnement des institutions territoriales se révèle impossible".** The assessment that it was impossible to govern could be made either unilaterally in Paris after hearing the advice of the President of the Territorial Assembly and the President of the Territorial Government, or it could be made in reaction to a demand from the Territorial Government. Paris could thus rein in the Territorial Assembly should its actions be deemed out of order.

Table 37. French Polynesia's Statute of 1977



Source: P.-Y. Toullelan & B. Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.123.

Table 38. French Polynesia's Internal Autonomy Statute, 1984, 1990



Source: Toullelan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.147.

Within these limits, territorial representatives experienced increased powers under the Internal Autonomy Statute. Article 21 of the 1977 statute had allowed the Territorial Government Council authority over territorial domains, the purchase of real estate for territorial administration purposes, the acceptance of gifts to the territory, public works, tariffs, private airports, territorial administration, local statistics, price control, preparation of import programmes within the budget constraints set by the State, local commerce, the application of labour law, the teaching of local languages, and the codification of territorial regulations.¹⁶³ The Territorial Government, the body which replaced the Government Council, had greater powers than its predecessor. Unlike the Government Council, it was not presided over by the High Commissioner, who was now represented by a Territorial Vice-President elected by the Territorial Assembly. Instead, at the head of the Territorial Government was a President elected by the Territorial Assembly. The Territorial Government could have six to ten Ministers, as outlined in article 5, who were chosen by the Territorial President.¹⁶⁴ This Government exercised authority over territorial taxation, public health, transport, professional codes, insurance regulations, public market codes, the control of weights and measures and the repression of fraud, price control, urban planning, veterinary services, territorial administrative personnel, the issuing of statistics, territorial administration buildings, internal road, air and sea links, electric power production, abattoirs, ports and airports, weather forecasting, post and telecommunications, sport and culture, labour law and some professional training.

Some of these attributions marked the return of powers lost under the Fifth Republic, namely the restoration of post and telecommunications to territorial control, and of the first cycle of secondary teaching. The Internal Autonomy Statute foresaw that the second cycle of secondary teaching would be returned to territorial tutelage in 1989 at the territory's demand. This actually occurred on 1 January 1988, in response to a private member's bill tabled in late 1987 by Edouard Fritch, who was then the RPR Deputy for East Polynesia.¹⁶⁵

State-territorial contracts were continued under the Internal Autonomy Statute. Articles 69 and 70 of the statute of 1977 had established the possibility of development contracts in the fields of technical and financial aid.¹⁶⁶ This arrangement was confirmed by articles 103 and 104 of the 1984 statute. The Internal Autonomy Statute did not differ greatly from its predecessor in this regard.

Compared with either the 1977 statute, or with the New Caledonian statutes of the 1980s, the Internal Autonomy Statute went further in recognising the existence of indigenous cultural identity. Article 90 stated: "La langue tahitienne est une matière enseignée dans le cadre de l'horaire normal des écoles maternelle et primaire".¹⁶⁷ In the early 1990s, most indigenous languages of New Caledonia had yet to receive such status. The same article allowed the substitution by the territory of Tahitian with other Polynesian languages in the curricula of certain schools, in recognition of the cultural identities of archipelagoes such as the Marquesas, where Tahitian was not widely spoken. In practice, the teaching of Tahitian and other indigenous languages had been permitted in French Polynesian schools since 1980. Prior to this, French was the only language allowed, and pupils had been punished for speaking their native tongues in class.¹⁶⁸ Local culture had been financed by the territory since the 1970s, when the Tahitian museum and a Polynesian Cultural Centre were founded.¹⁶⁹ Tahitian had been recognised by the Territorial Assembly as an official language in November 1980,¹⁷⁰ and it had become the main language used in the chamber from 1982. The three Ia Mana Councillors elected that year insisted on speaking Tahitian instead of French, much to the consternation of journalists and some assembly secretaries who did not know the language. This precedent was followed by representatives of Here Ai'a and most of the other Territorial Councillors who, being *demis*, were bilingual.¹⁷¹ Due to the numbers

of the Tahitian population, Tahitian has become the dominant indigenous language in French Polynesia. It has penetrated public life to a far greater extent than any of the Melanesian languages in New Caledonia,¹⁷² although it has not resisted the incursion of French as well as Wallisian and Futunan. Tahitian preeminence among local languages was resented by Polynesians from the outer islands. Marquesan Territorial Councillors have, on occasion, caused bewilderment among their Tahitian colleagues by addressing the Territorial Assembly in Marquesan, in an assertion of their identity in the face of both Tahitian and French cultural hegemony.¹⁷³

Flosse feted the Internal Autonomy Statute as a substantial, if not total, fulfilment of his specifications for local rule. Its promulgation brought him considerable acclaim, and assisted his election on 14 September 1984 as the first Territorial President of French Polynesia under the new administrative framework.¹⁷⁴ Flosse's achievement eroded the following of Here Ai'a and left the party in some disarray. Juventin's leadership of the Here Ai'a was questioned in the light of Flosse's predominance over territorial politics. Tinomana Ebb, a Territorial Councillor and a party stalwart, left it in September 1984 to form Te Aratia o Te Nunaa.¹⁷⁵ Te Aratia however did not manage to challenge Here Ai'a and has remained a minor party with Ebb as its sole territorial representative. The autonomists had been soundly outmanoeuvred by Flosse as a result of his conclusion of the statute negotiations. He had implemented autonomist policies under Mitterrand to a greater extent than they had managed under Giscard d'Estaing. The former members of the Front Uni found themselves suffering from an image problem. No longer could they distinguish themselves from Tahoeraa Huiraatira by calling themselves 'autonomists'. They were left politically discredited, divided, and consequently faced diminishing electoral support. The Maohi nationalist fringe was likewise challenged by Flosse's achievement. The need for independence from France was questioned by Flosse and his followers, who pointed out that the Internal Autonomy Statute addressed demands for self-rule, and held the advantage of being open to further modifications should the territory so choose.

Flosse instituted an annual territorial holiday to commemorate the signing of the Internal Autonomy Statute. This symbol of success was abandoned under the administration of Alexandre Léontieff from 1987 to 1991. At the first anniversary celebrations at the end of June 1985, in front of a crowd that included Penne and Messmer, who represented respectively Mitterrand and the RPR, Flosse freely paid tribute to the Socialist Government and to the Territorial Government for their part in the negotiations. In particular he praised Mitterrand's wisdom in transcending party divisions and impartially overseeing the statute negotiations.¹⁷⁶ He placed the French Polynesian Internal Autonomy Statute in the traditions of the French Republic, describing the spirit of legislation of both the Fourth and Fifth Republics as offering to the TOM "des institutions nouvelles fondées sur l'idéal commun de liberté, d'égalité et de fraternité et conçues en vue de leur évolution démocratique".¹⁷⁷ This rosy account avoided any mention of de Gaulle's opposition to local nationalists, or of local opposition to joining the Fifth Republic, but did go so far as to pay homage to Pouvanaa, Teariki and Sanford for their furtherance of Polynesian identity through support for the 1977 statute. These comments preceded the observation that the previous statute had not gone far enough in granting self-rule. This observation could be regarded as out of place coming from a man who had organised opposition to the pro-independence vote in 1958, supported the arrival of the CEP, and who had criticised the trio in question for their autonomist stances before borrowing their political platform.

On the subject of the implementation of the Internal Autonomy Statute, Flosse mentioned the rapidity and efficiency with which new territorial institutions had been set up, and pointed out that although grey areas remained

and further reform would be needed, the legislation was adaptable to change without jeopardising the status of French Polynesia as a TOM:

Ce pacte est bien entendu perfectible mais il convient tout d'abord d'en faire l'expérience et de définir, en concertation avec l'Etat, les difficultés et les obscurités auxquelles il conviendra de remédier. [...] C'est dans ce sens que nous considérons qu'il est évolutif. [...] Je ne me cache pas que certains, parmi les polynésiens [français], envisagent ce mot évolutif dans un sens tout différent du nôtre. [...] Il y a ceux, de plus en plus rares, qui nostalgiques d'une période coloniale révolue, pensent encore qu'il n'y a point de salut en dehors de la départementalisation. [...] Il y a aussi ceux qui, par inconscience ou par calcul personnel, nous poussent à réclamer une indépendance qui ne peut que nous conduire au chaos et à la misère. [...] Nous rejetons ces deux extrêmes mais cela ne veut pas dire que nous sommes partisans de l'immobilisme.¹⁷⁸

Flosse used his speech at the celebrations to establish the orientations of his administration's political programme. Now that the new territorial administrative structure had been established, work could proceed on social reform "en faveur des plus démunis", accords could be arbitrated between employers and unions, and investment could be made in the exploitation of natural resources.¹⁷⁹

At this time, New Caledonia was still embroiled in controversy over self-determination, to the neglect of socio-economic reform. While Fabius and Pisani were confronted with troubles in New Caledonia, Lemoine was able to supervise the implementation of the Autonomy Statute. He did so for the first 18 months following its promulgation in September 1984, through until the Socialist defeat in the legislative elections of March 1986.

While New Caledonian political factions were at loggerheads with Paris in the first months of 1985, relations between the French Polynesian Government and Paris were exceedingly amenable, considering the different political pedigrees of their respective representatives. Far from bringing wrack and ruin at the hands of the PC, as had been suggested by some local Giscardians in 1980, Socialist rule had proved administratively fruitful. The period of conservative dominance in Papeete which coincided with PS dominance in Paris produced a high level of accord and cooperation rather than the dissent and discord which might have been expected. The marginal status of the Maohi nationalists in French Polynesia, the weight of territorial dependence on funds from Paris, and Socialist preparedness to meet most of the demands of the Tahoeraa Huiraatira, lay at the source of this political marriage of convenience.

After the State-Territorial Coordinating Committee established by the Internal Autonomy Statute held its first meeting in Paris during the first week of December 1985, Lemoine presented a positive balance sheet of the first fourteen months of the new administrative arrangements, asserting that they had met local demands and responded to Socialist policy of recognising local conditions in the DOM-TOM:

Il me semble que l'autonomie interne répond en ce moment à une nécessité, à un besoin qui s'était exprimé en Polynésie française. Je crois que le propre de l'outre-mer est d'avoir ses spécificités et donc il faut savoir adapter les conditions statutaires à ces situations.¹⁸⁰

The Limits of Autonomy

Despite prevailing good will between Papeete and Paris from September 1984 to March 1986, this period did not pass without some controversy. The form of autonomy which the Internal Autonomy Statute created had its limits. The sovereignty boundaries which could not be crossed involved French Polynesian external relations with the other Pacific TOM, with the South Pacific region and, later, with Europe. In his enthusiasm to exercise greater powers on behalf of the territory, and driven by partisan political opportunism, in 1985 Flosse collided with the first of the barriers which these limits imposed.

Flosse aroused the ire of Pisani on 13 February 1985 when he arrived in Nouméa to sign an "alliance des Territoires français du Pacifique".¹⁸¹ Acting as Presidents of the Territorial Governments of New Caledonia and French Polynesia, Ukeiwé and Flosse cosigned a document which had been approved by the Territorial Assemblies of both TOM.¹⁸² Consisting of 12 articles, the Interterritorial Alliance was a tool for expressing the united conservative opposition of the territorial administrations of the three Pacific TOM to the concept of New Caledonian independence. (Appendix 5) The document stressed the necessity of preserving the Republican values and democratic traditions of France at a time when these were "mis en péril, dans cette partie du Pacifique, par des tentatives d'hégémonie faites sous couvert d'idéologies". Negative, veiled reference to the dangers of Kanak nationalism was contrasted with the necessity for "le respect de la Constitution", "la défense du monde libre dans cette partie du monde", and the maintenance of "l'intégrité du territoire national". The Alliance stressed pan-TOM unity "établie sur la base d'un idéal commun de liberté, d'égalité et de fraternité et sur la solidarité des peuples qui les composent [...] pour assurer la prospérité économique, le progrès social et le développement culturel de leurs habitants". The rest of the text established a conference of Territorial Presidents which would be held four times a year, with a Secretariat as well as a Permanent Interterritorial Commission comprised of two Territorial Councillors or Ministers from each territory. This structure was to be financed from territorial budgets. At the time of the signature of the Alliance, Wallis and Futuna was not a party to the document, though provision was included for it to join. From 6 to 14 February 1985 an RPCR delegation to Mata Utu lobbied the Territorial Assembly and custom representatives there to back the Alliance. The delegation claimed to have Wallis and Futuna's "oui de principe", with Brial expressing "le soutien total" of the local branch of the RPR.¹⁸³

The Interterritorial Alliance constituted Flosse's expression of solidarity with the RPCR, and opposition to Kanak nationalism. While Flosse had embraced internal autonomy for French Polynesia, he shunned the concept of independence in association which was proposed by Pisani for New Caledonia in January 1985. At the time of the signature of the Interterritorial Alliance, Flosse advocated that in the absence of a sympathetic government in Paris, it was up to the representatives of the Pacific TOM to unite and display their attachment to France, their rejection of any possible balkanisation of the French Pacific, and their need for unity in the face of presumed foreign threats.¹⁸⁴ In backing the RPCR, Flosse used his status as the highest French Polynesian political representative to act as the protector of French Polynesian immigrants in New Caledonia.¹⁸⁵ Among the inhabitants of Thio, the mining settlement occupied by the FLNKS in late 1984, were around 700 Polynesians, including Wallisians and Tahitians.¹⁸⁶

In March 1985, the alliance partners began consideration of a common market for the French Pacific, which would involve the establishment of a free trade zone.¹⁸⁷ This proposition was cut short by Socialist opposition to the Interterritorial Alliance. Pisani was unimpressed with the pact. He declared it both illegal and unconstitutional and began legal proceedings against it at the

time of its signature.¹⁸⁸ He contended that Flosse and Ukeiwé had exceeded their authority and were infringing domains which were the concern of the French State. He had grounds for asserting this. Article 3 of the Interterritorial Alliance, which envisaged that alliance members would establish direct contacts with foreign South Pacific territories, was a direct challenge to state authority over foreign affairs. Flosse and Ukeiwé responded by publicly denouncing the Pisani Plan, and by claiming that as a Socialist appointee Pisani was unfit to represent France because he lacked impartiality.¹⁸⁹ Neither Flosse nor Ukeiwé were particularly notable for their objectivity over this matter themselves, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Interterritorial Alliance was a product of the sort of partisan attitudes for which they berated Pisani.

On 9 April 1985, the New Caledonian Administrative Tribunal annulled the Interterritorial Alliance, judging that Ukeiwé had exceeded the constitutional powers of the Territorial President as outlined under the Lemoine Statute.¹⁹⁰ Specifically, relations with foreign powers lay beyond the competences outlined in the statutory regulations. Flosse and Ukeiwé circumvented this annulment by signing another alliance in Papeete on 29 June 1985. The new text was exactly the same as the one which had preceded it, except that it dropped all mention of territorial powers of negotiation with foreign states.¹⁹¹ By this stage the achievement of the Interterritorial Alliance was more rhetorical than anything else. Since June 1985, nothing much has come of the Alliance. When the presumed imminence of plans for New Caledonian independence in association with France receded, so too did Flosse and Ukeiwé's front against it.

In August 1985, Flosse was to have another of his initiatives as Territorial President rebuffed. He attended a South Pacific Forum meeting on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands with the aim of obtaining observer status for French Polynesia. With the sponsorship of the Cook Islands, Flosse argued with Forum members that French Polynesia should receive observer status so that it might be "à la fois la voix de la France et celle de la Polynésie Française au sein du Forum du Pacifique Sud".¹⁹² He indicated that the status of French Polynesia was now comparable to that of the Cook Islands, which had full member status in the Forum in spite of not being a fully independent State. French Polynesia was able to attend South Pacific Commission meetings; by logical extension it should be able to attend Forum meetings as well. The response of the South Pacific Forum was that French Polynesian autonomy was not as far evolved as that of the Cook Islands. Flosse was still, in essence, a French representative, not a Polynesian one. As such he would be denied observer status, as the Forum was a political organisation for South Pacific nations rather than for local representatives of a European power.¹⁹³

The European connection French Polynesia enjoyed through France came to impinge on the sphere of territorial administration under the Internal Autonomy Statute during the late 1980s. Since the birth of the EEC in 1957, French Polynesia and the other Pacific TOM had been considered community members, falling within the Treaty of Rome's category of Overseas Country or Territory.¹⁹⁴ French membership of the European Community had resulted in certain advantages for territorial trade. Products could be exported to Europe free of customs duty due to the islands' status as a European Overseas Territory, while European imports were still subjected to territorial import tariffs, provided that no discrimination was exercised over products originating from different Community members.¹⁹⁵ Moreover, French Polynesian copra exports benefited from European Community subsidies.¹⁹⁶ As European citizens, French Polynesians have since 1959 enjoyed the right of free circulation within the EEC, while reciprocal arrangements did not apply to French Polynesia.¹⁹⁷ The territory has also been eligible for European development funding.¹⁹⁸ Under EEC legislation, French Polynesia and the other Pacific TOM were considered to be little extensions of Europe in the South Pacific, while the fragile nature of their economies and the smallness of their populations were shielded

by these and other protective measures. The extent to which European status applied to French Polynesia in other respects was to prompt considerable debate in the territory in the years preceding European Union in 1993.

Speculation centred on whether internal autonomy might be threatened by EC representatives in Brussels and Strasbourg. Although Flosse and Ukeiwé¹⁹⁹ have been European parliamentarians, none of the Pacific TOM have permanent direct representation in the European Parliament or in other EC bodies. Generally metropolitan French representatives are considered to speak on the behalf of the Pacific TOM in EC discussions, and are obliged to consult territorial leaders over legislation that is of direct concern to them.²⁰⁰ As is the case with French legislation, Paris can choose to ignore the opinions of territorial leaders, whose role is limited to an advisory capacity. This arrangement has been unsatisfactory on those occasions when the French Polynesian Territorial Government has differed with Paris on certain aspects of EC legislation. Not only may its opinion be ignored by France, but also the territory has no direct recourse to the EC. A similar situation, of course, applies to metropolitan Departments, which are less privileged than French Polynesia in that their leaders are not able to impose tariffs to protect the local economy. For example, the entry of Spain and Portugal into the EEC affected the wine producers of southern France, as cheaper Portuguese and Spanish wines were able to enter the French market without hindrance.

Of the various measures envisaged for European Union in 1993, those enabling the lifting of border controls and visa restrictions for European citizens seeking to live and work in other member countries aroused the greatest disquiet in French Polynesia. Visions of hordes of sun-seeking Europeans hoping to live and work on the territory's renowned tropical islands existed in the minds of certain territorial leaders. Local politicians speculated that such an influx would deprive French Polynesians of job opportunities, as the labour market would be flooded by well-educated outsiders. The spectre of European firms moving in to buy up large portions of the local economy was also raised.²⁰¹ Paris has tended to dismiss or ignore such concerns as groundless, and has not always shown great concern in calming them.

The first major open expression of French Polynesian discontent with French handling of European integration came in 1989. In May of that year, the Territorial Assembly received the text of an EC bill which would permit European doctors and veterinarians to establish themselves freely anywhere in the EC. On the grounds that European immigrants might put such local professionals out of work, the Territorial Assembly unanimously opposed the bill in a deliberation on 26 May, only to discover that the bill had already been approved by France.²⁰²

The Territorial Government united with opposition parties and called on voters in the territory to protest by boycotting the European parliamentary elections in June 1989. On polling day, 18 June, only 10.76% of the local electorate voted.²⁰³ This turnout showed the effects of a greater electoral boycott than any the FLNKS had organised in New Caledonia. Even compared with the traditionally poor French Polynesian participation rates in European elections, this was a low turnout. In the European elections of June 1979, 56.66% of registered voters had cast votes.²⁰⁴ In June 1984, 58.48% of registered voters had participated.²⁰⁵ It was speculated that most of the minority who voted in June 1989 consisted of metropolitan French living in French Polynesia.²⁰⁶

In the National Assembly Alexandre Léontieff, at that time Deputy for West Polynesia, called on the Rocard Government to permit French Polynesia to negotiate directly with the EC in defence of its interests:

Il convient [...] d'éviter que les institutions territoriales ne soient progressivement dépouillées de leurs compétences au profit des instances européennes [...] Mais d'autre part, les élus polynésiens estiment que les

directives européennes, prises sans consultation préalable des responsables du territoire, pourraient compromettre gravement l'équilibre économique et social local.²⁰⁷

Brice Lalonde, the Secretary of State to Environmental Affairs, replied on behalf of Le Pensec, promising that the Government would endeavour to take French Polynesia into account in future EC negotiations, and would continue consulting the territory, although he made no response to Léontieff's demand for direct EC representation. Not surprisingly, French Polynesian autonomy did not stretch to the extent of permitting independent representation to the EC.

The question of European immigration and investment in French Polynesia became more pressing as European Union approached. Article 8(a) of the Maastricht Treaty permitted European citizens to circulate and settle freely in the EC without immigration controls,²⁰⁸ while barriers to foreign investment were also lifted. Senator Millaud expressed general support for European Union with reservations in these fields. He pointed out that although under article 3 of the Internal Autonomy Statute the High Commissioner controlled immigration, and under article 31 had to consult the Territorial Government on immigration permits, this arrangement might be overridden by the Maastricht Treaty. European citizens refused residence in French Polynesia could contest this veto by invoking EC arbitration on the grounds of discrimination contrary to articles 8D and 138D of the Treaty.²⁰⁹ Article 3 of the Maastricht Treaty, which envisaged fixing joint European policy on agriculture, fisheries and tourism, represented another contentious point for Millaud.²¹⁰ He expressed the reservation that the territorial economy might end up being adversely affected by ill-considered decisions made in Strasbourg and Brussels.²¹¹

In 1989, Léontieff was highly critical of European integration,²¹² although oddly he did not doubt its economic and social benefits for French Polynesia. He differed from Flosse, who had serious doubts about the implications for the territory, and who called for French Polynesian voters to abstain from the French referendum on the Maastricht Treaty in September 1992.²¹³ Léontieff advocated a vote for European Union, arguing that the greater export opportunities it offered outweighed possible immigration problems. Vernaudeau and Millaud, the other two French Polynesian parliamentary representatives at the time, broadly agreed with Léontieff, but of the three, Léontieff was the most vigorous in his support.²¹⁴

Addressing Millaud's reservations, Léontieff pointed to article 232 of the Treaty and claimed that its provisions for the control of European immigration to Overseas Territories would prevent a European invasion of French Polynesia. Léontieff also supported the Treaty because it recognised the autonomy of the Pacific TOM. Although article 227 declared that in the case of policy divergence between the EC and an Overseas Country or Territory, the European Council would have the final say, a declaration appended to the Treaty allowed a contrary resolution. Where differences were marked, a member country and its Overseas Territory could act in the interests of the territory and override the European Council.²¹⁵ Such a measure could be applied to European immigration and investment in French Polynesia, as well as to the application of economic policy. In the light of this declaration, it appears that France should be able to block European immigration and investment which it deems harmful to French Polynesian interests, and to veto any European economic policy ill-adapted to it or the other Pacific TOM.

Debate in Papeete over the implications of European integration for the Internal Autonomy Statute brought into contention the durability of the legislation, and the possibility that it might be overruled unilaterally by forces beyond the control of the Territorial Government. With the aim of strengthening their autonomy French Polynesian representatives have, since 1984, lobbied Paris for various modifications to the Statute.

During cohabitation from 1986 to 1988, this lobbying did not make any notable progress. While the Chirac Government made vigorous efforts to overturn Socialist legislation for New Caledonia implemented between 1981 and 1986, the same administration was reluctant to tinker with the Internal Autonomy Statute. It had no mandate or inclination to revise legislation which had been unanimously approved by the National Assembly, and feted by RPR representatives in the French Polynesian Government. Moreover although the Statute was conceived of as open to further change, it had only been in operation for 18 months at the time of Chirac's accession to government. Insufficient time had passed for justifiable major revisions to be implemented. To attempt legislative revisions in French Polynesia as were undertaken in New Caledonia would have been unnecessary and pointless. Pons announced during a visit to Papeete in May 1986 that he saw no need to enlarge French Polynesian autonomy, and warned that going further in that direction might provide inadvertent encouragement to local nationalists. He declared to the Territorial Assembly in May 1986:

Vous bénéficiez [d'un] statut de large autonomie, qui correspond, j'en suis persuadé, aux vœux de l'immense majorité des Polynésiens. Nous ne devons donc certainement pas bouleverser vos institutions nouvelles. Elles établissent un équilibre qui, globalement, paraît satisfaisant.²¹⁶

As with the earlier round of statute negotiations from 1982, the necessary precondition to further statute renovation was a change in government in both Paris and Papeete. The appointment of Rocard as Prime Minister in May 1988 marked the beginning of a new era for French Polynesia as it did for New Caledonia. The Rocard Government was confronted with major changes in the French Polynesian political landscape since the Socialists had left government in March 1986. (Tables 39, 40)

Tahoeraa Huiraatira was no longer preeminent in local politics, having been displaced in a bout of infighting that took place in 1987. The leader of this dissent was Alexandre Léontieff, who was then Minister for the Economy, Tourism and the Sea. Discontented with territorial social and economic policies, which had become discredited by the social disharmony evident in the Papeete riot of October 1987, Léontieff decided to break away from the Territorial Government.²¹⁷ On 1 December 1987, along with Georges Kelly, the Agriculture Minister, and Huguette Hong Kiou, Social Affairs Minister, he resigned from the Government.²¹⁸ At this time, Flosse was in Paris, fulfilling his duties as Secretary of State to the South Pacific, an appointment he had received from Chirac in March 1986. He had resigned from the post of Territorial President on 9 February 1987, because of the pressure of his ministerial duties, and had been replaced three days later by his associate Jacques Teuira.²¹⁹ Since February, Flosse had been constrained to devote less attention to territorial politics because of his series of ministerial visits around the Pacific. Flosse returned to Papeete on 3 December to find Tahoeraa Huiraatira and the Territorial Government in a state of disarray. Faced with a motion of censure from 28 of the 41 members of the Territorial Assembly, including 14 majority Councillors, on 7 December Teuira resigned from the territorial presidency.²²⁰

He was replaced by Alexandre Léontieff two days later.²²¹ That month Léontieff formed a new party, Te Tiarama (The Torch), from the Tahoeraa Huiraatira members who had sided with him. He consolidated his power through the support of autonomist and Maohi nationalist representatives. In all, his new majority encompassed representatives from ten different parties. Their unity was cemented as much by their common dislike of Flosse as by their hopes for Léontieff's vision of a territorial "plan de relance". It was Léontieff who was to be instrumental in the renegotiation of the Internal Autonomy

**Table 39. French Legislative Elections, 1986.
French Polynesian Results**

16 March

Registered voters 103,489
Valid votes 74,359

Party	Votes	% of valid votes	Seats
Tahoeraa	30,580	41.12	2
Amuitahira ¹	14,252	19.17	0
Ia Mana	6,680	8.98	0
Here A'ia	13,048	17.55	0
Tavini	4,739	6.37	0
Te Ea No Maohi	4,231	5.69	0
PSP	829	1.11	0

Gaston Flosse and Alexandre Léontieff were elected.

Source: Official results, Haut-Commissariat de la République en Polynésie française (photocopies).

¹ Amuitahira No Polynesia. A short-lived coalition including Ebb, Vernaudeau, Braun-Ortega and their followers.

**Table 40. French Polynesian Territorial Elections
1986**

Territorial Results: 16 March

Registered voters 103,667
Valid votes 74,492

Party	Votes	% of valid votes	Seats
Tahoeraa	29,881	40.11	22
Amuitahira	12,495	16.77	5
Here Ai'a	10,369	13.92	5
Ia Mana	6,134	8.23	3
Tavini	4,770	6.4	2
PSP	374	0.50	0
Others	10,469	14.05	4

Sources: Official results, Haut-Commissariat de la République en Polynésie française (photocopies); Henningham: *France in the South Pacific* p.151.

Statute, although at the time of his election, this prospect was considered a less pressing matter than various development plans.²²²

Widespread backing for Léontieff during the first months of his administration was apparent when he stood for re-election as Deputy for West Polynesia in the legislative elections of June 1988. (Table 42) In March 1986, he had been elected to the seat on an RPR ticket, at the same time as Flosse had won the East Polynesian seat for the party. (Table 39) By June 1988, Léontieff's political alignment was perplexing. He was described by *Le Monde* in its electoral results as standing on an "RPR/PS" platform,²²³ while not really belonging to either camp. It was true that he had campaigned for Chirac in the presidential elections,²²⁴ in which Mitterrand had gained an absolute majority of the vote in French Polynesia. (Table 41) However Léontieff was not a member of Chirac's inner circle as Flosse was, and had not been on good terms with the Prime Minister after having won the territorial presidency.²²⁵ Neither had Léontieff joined the PS, although he and his ally Vernaudeau had Socialist backing in 1988 because of their challenge to Flosse's authority and their consequent nuisance value to Chirac. Spelling a major reverse for the Tahoeraa Huiraatira-RPR axis, Léontieff was re-elected in June 1988, while Flosse lost his seat to Vernaudeau, an independent presidential majority candidate.²²⁶ By the time of his unsuccessful attempt at re-election in the legislative elections of March 1993, (Table 48) Léontieff had shifted allegiance to the UDF. This move finalised his break with the RPR or, more to the point, with Flosse, its preeminent spokesman in French Polynesia.²²⁷ Evident in the career of Léontieff is the extent to which personality politics rather than political ideology played a determining role. Metropolitan French political categories such as 'Left' and 'Right' are inadequate for defining the fickle shifts of loyalties and party allegiances in Papeete.

Thanks to the majority support of a governing coalition which even included Ia Mana representatives, and in spite of his past associations with the RPR, in mid-1988 Léontieff found himself comfortably placed to negotiate with the Rocard Government. Léontieff wished, as Flosse had, to see the powers of the territory extended beyond the confines of the Internal Autonomy Statute. This goal was well in keeping with the open-ended nature of the terms of the Statute, and Paris was receptive to certain revisions of its text. Discussions on redrafting the legislation took place between territorial representatives and Le Pensec in Paris in July 1989. Le Pensec visited Papeete that month to announce that a "modernisation" of the Internal Autonomy Statute would be carried out in the months to follow.²²⁸ Rocard confirmed this undertaking during his own visit to French Polynesia from 24 to 27 August 1989. He pronounced himself prepared to adopt new measures, namely "clarifier les rapports entre le Gouvernement territorial et l'assemblée, [...] développer le champ de compétences du Territoire, notamment pour les relations économiques régionales, [...] apporter des garanties supplémentaires de rigueur dans la gestion des affaires publiques avec la création d'une Chambre territoriale des comptes, [...] développer les structures de concertation dans les archipels".²²⁹ The aim of such reform was presented by Rocard and Le Pensec as fine-tuning rather than as a major overhaul, as they both observed that the Internal Autonomy Statute had largely functioned satisfactorily during its first five years.

The modifications to the legislation were codified with the promulgation of Law no.90-612 in July 1990.²³⁰ The changes had received the unanimous approval of the Senate on 17 April 1990,²³¹ and had been adopted by a majority of the National Assembly with PS and UDF backing. The RPR and the UDC²³² opposed the revision of the Internal Autonomy Statute on the basis that increased territorial autonomy was unnecessary. The PC abstained. The Communists were not opposed to the principle of increasing territorial responsibilities, but did not agree with the revisions proposed.²³³ This law was consistent with the proposals that Rocard had outlined eleven months before and enhanced the

Internal Autonomy Statute. Many of the changes to the Statute were cosmetic, consisting of clarifications of passages which had been found ambiguous. For example, article 3, subsection 5 of the 1984 legislation stipulating state control over foreign commerce, with the exception of territorial control over the setting of the annual import programme and the level of territorial imports under articles 25(9) and 26(1) was compressed into a single clause.²³⁴ The other changes concerning state authority were similarly minor. Article 3, subsection 13, tidied up the outline of the State's role in the functioning of the justice system, for which it assumed the administrative costs, with some minor exceptions. A section in article 3, which dealt with the territorial EEZ, defined the procedure by which the territory would be conceded the exploration and exploitation rights to natural resources, without in any way threatening state sovereignty in this domain.²³⁵

Globally though, the territory benefited from various concessionary measures implemented by Law no.90-612. Under article 5, the number of Ministers in the Territorial Government was increased from a range of six to ten to six to 12, a change which both lightened the workload of individual Ministers, and enlarged the ministerial payroll. Article 28 permitted the Territorial Government to authorise all direct foreign (non-French) investments in French Polynesia, whereas previously it had not been competent if such investment exceeded 80MFF in value. This was a potentially important change. An addition to article 31 served to address local concerns about immigration control by instituting a State-Territorial Consultative Immigration Committee. The Territorial President enjoyed enhanced status. Under article 37, the requirement to submit the presidential list of Ministers to the Territorial Assembly for approval was abrogated.²³⁶ The President was allowed greater powers of representation to international fora. Proposals could be made by the President to the State for the opening of negotiations with Pacific nations in any field relevant to French Polynesia. Under article 39, the President was additionally guaranteed representation at such negotiations, and could be designated to represent the French Republic either in Pacific international organisations, or in the United Nations.

The Territorial Assembly, although deprived of its power of veto over the composition of Territorial Governments, retained its capacity to call a no confidence vote, and under article 52 *bis* was given financial autonomy from the Government by being allowed to set its own budget, with the Territorial Assembly President assuming charge of its accounts. The Economic and Social Committee was renamed the Economic, Social and Cultural Council in a revision of articles 82 to 89, a modification indicative of a wider advisory role to the Territorial Assembly than it had held previously.

A major addition to the territorial administration outlined by Law no.90-612 was the creation, under article 89 *bis*, of Archipelago Councils. One of these was envisaged each for the Leeward Islands, the Windward Islands, the Austral Islands, the Tuamotu and Gambier Islands, and the Marquesa Islands. (Map 7) Comprised of a mix of local body and territorial representatives, these bodies were to be consulted by the Territorial President over territorial development plans that might touch upon them. Their advisory role extended to social and cultural as well as economic affairs. The Archipelago Councils addressed long-standing complaints, particularly from the distant Marquesas, that the interests of the Society Islands tended to be over-represented at territorial level due to their demographic weight.²³⁷ Unfortunately for the outer islands, these administrative entities have been neglected by the Territorial Government since the return by Flosse to the office of Territorial President in April 1991.²³⁸ They may yet receive more attention and encouragement under future Territorial Governments.

Addressing to some extent an issue which had not received any great attention in the original text of the Internal Autonomy Statute, article 90 *bis* of

**Table 41. French Presidential Elections, 1988.
French Polynesian Results**

First Round: 24 April

Registered voters	107,984
Votes cast	60,585
Turnout	56.11%
Valid votes	59,381

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Mitterrand (PS)	26,051	43.0
Chirac (RPR)	23,700	39.12
Barre	5,992	9.89
Le Pen (FN)	1,728	2.85
Lajoinie (PC)	512	0.85
Others	1,398	2.31

Second Round: 8 May

Registered voters	98,714
Votes cast	58,013
Turnout	58.77%
Valid votes	57,112

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Mitterrand	31,021	53.47
Chirac	26,091	44.97

Sources: Official results, Haut-Commissariat de la République en Polynésie française (photocopies); *Le Monde* 10 mai 1988.

**Table 42. French Legislative Elections, 1988.
French Polynesian Results**

First Round: 12 June

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Registered voters	64,075
Votes cast	32,776
Turnout	51.15%
Valid votes	32,354

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Léontieff (RPR/PS)	13,225	40.35
Fritch (RPR)	7,960	24.29
Temaru (Tavini)	4,587	13.99
Revault ¹	2,171	6.62
Graffe (UDF)	2,067	6.31
Others	2,344	7.15

Second constituency (East Polynesia)

Registered voters	43,856
Votes cast	24,725
Turnout	56.38%
Valid votes	24,245

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Vernaudeau ²	11,817	47.79
Flosse (RPR)	11,416	46.17
Salmon ³	1,012	4.09

¹ Independent, presidential majority candidate.

² Independent, presidential majority candidate.

³ Pro-independence candidate.

Second Round: 26 June

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Registered voters	64,080
Votes cast	30,871
Turnout	48.18%
Valid votes	30,018

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Léontieff (RPR/PS)	19,331	62.62
Fritch (RPR)	10,687	34.62

Second constituency (East Polynesia)

Registered voters	43,826
Votes cast	27,894
Turnout	63.65%
Valid votes	27,467

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Vernaudon	13,931	49.94
Flosse (RPR)	13,536	48.53

Sources: Official results, Haut-Commissariat de la République en Polynésie française (photocopies); *Le Monde* 14 juin 1988.

Law no.90-612 set up a "collège d'experts" to advise the Territorial Assembly on land reform, a measure designed to improve official adjudication of ownership disputes. In 1993 this college remained a paper entity, as no effort had been made to set it up in spite of ongoing land disputes.²³⁹ The Territorial Government has shown inertia over land reform issues, both because of their complexity, and because it has been distracted by a range of other socio-economic questions, and political infighting since 1984. Land issues persisted regardless. Ignoring them did not constitute a responsible administrative approach, either to the interests of potential commercial investors in the territory, or to those of indigenous landowners. As Bernard Poirine has pointed out, in the absence of any long-term policy on the difficult relationship between commercial investment and indigenous land rights, the Territorial Government has condemned itself to repetitive, circular arguing each time a new development project encounters opposition from indigenous land owners.²⁴⁰

French Polynesian land reform has not become the explosive issue that it has in New Caledonia, although it has been subject to the clash of traditional and European values. The primacy of individual over collective ownership has been challenged since the late 1980s by local nationalists and tribal leaders. Individual landholding had come to dominate the urban areas of the Society Islands, where tribal lands had been appropriated by the State. The legality of many of these appropriations has been attacked by those Polynesians who had lost their land, but French and territorial law continued to favour individual ownership.²⁴¹ Tahoeraa Huiraatira leaders argued that traditional land tenure was unproductive, archaic, and represented a hindrance to territorial development.²⁴² As with the RPCR in New Caledonia, the party would have preferred to dismantle tribal holdings to allow the establishment of commercially viable freehold farms.

Such options were restricted by the fact that traditional collective subsistence tenure remained dominant outside the urban parts of the Society Islands where European economic values were most strongly established.²⁴³ Plans prepared by Territorial Government for tourist and aquaculture investments have on occasion run into opposition from local landowners even within the Society Islands. The monarchist Pomare Party has been particularly active in this field since the 1980s, organising locals to protest against territorial development projects with land occupations reminiscent of those conducted by the FI and FLNKS.²⁴⁴ To what extent an equilibrium might be established between the conflicting interests of the Territorial Government and tribal leaders over land issues was still to be resolved in the early 1990s. In 1989, around 2,000 cases of land litigation were presented, about one third of the court cases which took place in the territory that year.²⁴⁵ Population growth concurrent with attempts at local development by the Territorial Government are likely to result in continuing tensions in this area in years to come. FI and FLNKS agitation forced the French Government to pay greater attention to New Caledonian land reform, and the creation of bodies such as ADRAF. No equivalent body exists in French Polynesia, although the need for one is evident, as is the need for greater legal recognition of tribal land ownership if French Polynesia is to avoid the confrontations New Caledonia experienced over land reform. Before such an organisation can be established, the Territorial Government will need to abandon its past apathy over land reform.

Law no.90-612 did not represent the conclusion of the possibilities of the Internal Autonomy Statute. French Polynesian representatives will continue to lobby Paris for increased powers in years to come but, in the absence of majority voter support for self-determination, the French State is not likely to allow autonomy to develop into independence in the near future. Paris still maintains its capacity to abrogate some or all of the Internal Autonomy Statute, in spite of measures by Alexandre Léontieff to lessen the facility with which a French Government might do this unilaterally. In 1992 he tabled an amendment in Parliament to rewrite article 74 of the French Constitution as part of a bill

designed to adapt the Constitution to reflect the implications of European Union. This amendment accorded the administrative statutes of the TOM "loi organique" status, meaning that they could only be revised through the vote of an absolute majority in Parliament.²⁴⁶ It was adopted into the French Constitution in June 1992.²⁴⁷ An affirmation of the statutory *status quo* for the French Pacific, this legislation nevertheless did not exclude the prospect of further reform. Although since March 1993 the Balladur Government has enjoyed the backing of an absolute majority in the National Assembly, there was no indication that it was contemplating statute reform in the first few months after its appointment. As was the case with the Chirac Government in 1986, national issues such as rising unemployment were of greater immediate concern in Paris than French Polynesian statute reform.

Socio-Economic Policy 1981 to 1991

While the various French Governments appointed since Mitterrand's election to the presidency in 1981 have managed to resolve French Polynesian administrative demands by ceding a degree of autonomy, the responses of Paris to social and economic issues have neither broken territorial financial dependence on metropolitan France, nor reduced social inequalities, nor stimulated economic recovery, three prospects deemed desirable by territorial leaders, French Governments and state planners since the 1970s.

Whether or not dependence was necessarily bad for French Polynesia, or whether a major reduction of it was possible, might validly be asked. The implantation of the CEP produced a period of unprecedented economic prosperity for part of the local population. For the majority of the inhabitants, mainly the Polynesians, who were not major beneficiaries of this economic prosperity, the effects were not so positive. The implantation of the CEP brought with it a high inflation rate and raised costs of living. Indigenous migration to Papeete deprived the agricultural sector of personnel, depopulated the outer islands, and resulted in the creation of a suburban underclass which hoped to gain a share in the prosperity but was poorly integrated for want of skills.

As seen from Paris, perhaps the greatest disadvantage of the economic prosperity which came with the arrival of the CEP was the manner in which it raised the level of local affluence without resulting in increased territorial economic self-reliance. French Polynesians became accustomed to living a modern consumer lifestyle which, if unaided by state spending and subsidies, the local economy could not have sustained. Succeeding Governments in Paris claimed to wish to see the lessening of territorial reliance on mainland France through the revival of local agriculture and the encouragement of investment in tourism and light industry. This was an unrealistic hope so long as the most personally profitable areas of employment in French Polynesia remained in the 'unproductive' sectors of the state and territorial administration. It was difficult to redeploy the workforce into areas which the State desired to see expanded. Those locals who were in well-paid, secure jobs in the state and territorial public services were unlikely to wish to go into business or take up agriculture. Dependence on imported foodstuffs and consumer items had developed in the 1980s to the point that a return to the less dependent times of the 1950s would be politically untenable. The introduction of import quotas would have caused a huge drop in territorial revenue, the collapse of a business sector reliant on imports, and would have resulted in widespread unemployment. Considering the population increase in French Polynesia since the 1960s, and the limited local resources, the territory is unlikely ever to be largely financially self-sufficient, any more than any of the sovereign island states of the South Pacific are. Political independence for places such as Vanuatu and the Cook Islands has not been accompanied by great progress towards economic independence. Their

governments remain reliant on foreign aid and development loans for their financial equilibrium, just as French Polynesia depends on aid, subsidies and loans from Paris. However unbridgeable the gap between expectation and reality might be, if judged by the criteria of state and territorial officialdom, lack of great progress in these three fields has been a major shortcoming in French policy in the territory during Mitterrand's period as President.

The absence of a nationalist movement as disruptive as the FLNKS allowed Paris to concentrate on promoting territorial economic expansion to an extent not possible in New Caledonia for much of the 1980s. Yet at the end of that decade prospects for New Caledonian development under the Matignon Accords appeared sounder than the socio-economic situation of French Polynesia.²⁴⁸ In spite of a plethora of government development programmes, over a decade since Ia Mana's promises, proffered in 1981, of radical and egalitarian Socialist social and economic reconstruction for French Polynesia directed from Paris, no such changes have occurred. Ten years after Mitterrand's election in 1981, one French Polynesian journalist was led to conclude: "La décennie Mitterrand, pour la Polynésie, c'est quelques timides changements mais surtout la continuité..."²⁴⁹

Like statute reform generally in the Pacific TOM, the direction of French Polynesian socio-economic policy was conditioned by criteria determined in Paris. As is discussed below, territorial leaders have been deficient in formulating original approaches to local developmental issues since attaining internal autonomy in 1984. Although PS, as well as UDF and RPR leaders, have periodically proclaimed the need for economic diversification, the reduction of dependence on metropolitan France, and the promotion of social equality, no fundamental change in the territorial economy and society has been effected by these parties in government, nor was it likely to occur, so long as the French Polynesian economy remained dependent on the CEP. Increased territorial economic dependence and growing social inequality were among the attendant effects of the CEP's presence, as has been explained earlier. It was no coincidence that these features persisted until April 1992 alongside the French Government's resolve to continue nuclear testing operations.

Socialist Ministers, having chosen to maintain the nuclear-based economy in French Polynesia established by their Gaullist and Giscardian predecessors, likewise chose to emulate their approach to local social and economic development. This approach entailed planning orientated towards the encouragement of the diversification of local production and the growth of a more export-orientated economy, while maintaining the CEP and its accompanying state of economic dependence. Not surprisingly, the CEP's presence has continued to outweigh measures promoting territorial self-sufficiency. The CEP and its accompanying support services represented, along with the state funding they brought into the islands, the most important feature of territorial economic life throughout the 1980s. In 1988, CEP and military expenditure in French Polynesia was equivalent to 57.0% of the territorial budget and was, of course, supplementary to it.²⁵⁰ Defence spending overall accounted for 55.0% of state expenditure in French Polynesia that year, the equivalent of 18.7% of territorial GDP.²⁵¹

Since 1981 the establishment of French Polynesian internal administrative autonomy has not been accompanied by economic independence from France. While the French Polynesian cash economy was more substantial than that of Wallis and Futuna, it had yet to meet the level of New Caledonian self-sufficiency which, it should be observed, was itself relatively low by the standards of developed nations. (Tables 6, 25) In the early 1990s, the illusory goal of French Polynesian territorial self-sufficiency represented only a slightly less distant prospect than it did in the early 1980s. There had been no export-led economic recovery in the territory of the sort considered desirable by the Eighth Plan and its successors, and French Polynesia remained dependent on imported

goods. From 1983 to 1991, the coverage rate of imports by exports did grow from 6.5% to 14.0%. This trend represented only the beginning of a serious diminution of dependence. (Table 43) From 1977 to 1989 exports contributed a low average contribution of 0.9% to annual territorial growth in GDP.²⁵² Import substitution, another orientation deemed desirable by the Eighth Plan to reduce local demands on expensive imported goods, likewise proved to be of marginal importance. From 1977 to 1989 import substitution contributed an average of 0.7% to the total growth of GDP per annum.²⁵³ Trade dependence on metropolitan France persisted. The largest supplier of imports in 1991 was metropolitan France. Of all imports that year, French goods represented the greatest single proportion, at 48.24% of the total value.²⁵⁴

In the absence of any Socialist willingness to abandon nuclear testing, there was to be no major challenge to the shape of a territorial society dependent on the CEP and state administrative funds for its existence. The priorities in social and economic changes begun in French Polynesia under Giscard d'Estaing were to retain their validity and formed the basis for continued development work in the 1980s. Socialist policy for the territory failed to differ with the orientations of Giscardian reformism to the extent that occurred in New Caledonia. Without a large Polynesian nationalist movement, there was to be no Socialist championing of Maohi identity to the degree that there was of Kanak identity, and no national debate on Maohi rights. Without an aggravating spur to their social consciences like the FLNKS, Socialist Ministers were not prompted to formulate original solutions to socio-economic questions in French Polynesia to the extent that they attempted them in New Caledonia. The recognition of Melanesian cultural identity and land rights under the Nainville les Roches declaration, the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, and the Matignon Accords, went far beyond state recognition of the indigenous population of French Polynesia. Prevalent in the implementation of socio-economic reform in French Polynesia by Socialist Governments was the dearth of leftist ideological thinking apparent in their handling of development issues in Wallis and Futuna.

The major axes of economic development in the Eighth Plan (1981 to 1985) - financial and technical assistance for professional training, public works construction, tourism projects, the expansion of aquacultural and agricultural production, as well as manufacturing - continued into the 1990s on the courses that had been determined over a decade earlier. The groundwork for many areas of developmental research had been laid in the 1970s. Aquaculture research, begun in the islands by the Pacific Oceanological Centre in 1973, was continued,²⁵⁵ as were renewable sea and solar energy projects started in 1978 by the French Atomic Energy Commission.²⁵⁶ These schemes began producing tangible results in the 1980s.

The establishment of Archipelago Councils in 1990 marked the extension of decentralisation measures begun in the early 1970s, when a territory-wide network of communes had been founded, and greater territorial funding had been channeled into local government. Development boards established in the 1970s, such as the Intercommunal Equalisation Fund in 1971,²⁵⁷ and the Management and Development Fund of the Islands of French Polynesia in 1979,²⁵⁸ respectively offered funding for communal administration and island development. Such measures to shore up the outer islands against depopulation, underdevelopment and economic decline by establishing viable cash economies were to be continued in the 1980s and early 1990s. Infrastructure renovation in the form of improved inter-island transport and communications was another aspect of decentralisation measures which were extremely important in a territory with a land and marine surface area equivalent to that of Europe, upon which were scattered small island populations living hundreds or thousands of kilometres apart.

The aim of such reforms has been to promote local development to counteract the concentration of population and economic activity on Tahiti. The

Table 43. French Polynesia's Exports and Imports 1983-1991

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Exports(MF CFP)	4,800	5,084	6,564	5,112	9,095	8,112	10,309	11,011	13,131
Imports(MF CFP)	74,200	85,662	88,940	92,667	90,587	87,487	91,664	91,927	93,829
Coverage Rate (%)	6.5	5.9	7.4	5.5	10.0	9.3	11.2	12.0	14.0

Sources: Bernard Lalanne: "Le prix des DOM-TOM" in *L'Expansion* 8-21 mars 1985 p.80; IEOM: *Exercice 1988 Rapport d'activité. Polynésie française* p.147, *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* p.168, *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.97.

drawback of these changes has been the expansion of local government bureaucracy on to islands, many of which had not experienced its permanent presence before. Miniature equivalents of what happened on Tahiti were established. A fortunate minority received employment in the new local government services, receiving a level of income that previously would not have been possible. Thus were created a privileged social group and income disparities which had not existed earlier. Rather than necessarily creating new work in the primary sector, the increase of bureaucracy in the islands expanded the tertiary sector, and imposed a greater financial burden on the Territorial Government.

Social reform in the territory was to present the governments of the 1980s with their greatest challenge. How to improve the living standards of slum dwellers who had already migrated to Tahiti in search of employment opportunities not offered in the outer isles was a difficult proposition. The Eighth Plan offered the nostrums of improving the education of such indigenous inhabitants to increase their chances of employment, and the provision of further public health and housing, alongside its vague mention of encouraging the greater participation of DOM-TOM inhabitants in administrative decisions affecting them. The Internal Autonomy Statute responded to this last consideration, but Territorial Governments since 1984 were to find themselves hard put to provide improved social services.

There remained the issue of the gap between public and private sector wages. Although in the end personal income tax was not introduced by Dijoud, it appeared likely that the Mauroy Government would adopt the idea in order to bring about wealth redistribution by providing territorial funding through taxes for social welfare measures. The replacement of import levies with personal taxation might also lower consumer prices on imported goods.

Such areas were the principal concerns and axes of development at the beginning of the 1980s. The rest of this section will examine how development theories expounded in Paris, and adopted by Territorial Governments since 1984, failed to produce radically improved living standards and economic self-sufficiency in French Polynesia. The seriousness of this problem was compounded by a worsening series of territorial budget overruns from the late 1980s caused by the profligate spending of the Territorial Government and worsened by the reduction in the activities of the CEP.

During his visit to French Polynesia in August 1981, as Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM Emmanuelli addressed the themes of greater territorial self-reliance through the growth of a productive economy, and the reduction of social inequalities. Like Pons six years later, he toured the slums on the outskirts of greater Papeete. Afterwards Emmanuelli proclaimed the need to redistribute local wealth through the introduction of personal income tax and greater social welfare funding:

Il faudra restreindre certains privilèges et s'attaquer aux inégalités les plus criantes, faire disparaître les zones de misère, changer enfin la nature profonde de ce système économique qui repose beaucoup trop sur une société de marchands et restaurer ensemble une société de producteurs.²⁵⁹

Emmanuelli called for fiscal reform which would redistribute income to the benefit of the poor, and for land reform which would reduce land speculation and lower the inflated real estate prices on Tahiti and elsewhere.

By the end of his period as Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM in March 1983, Emmanuelli had not achieved these ambitious goals. French Polynesia remained dependent on imports, although the value of its exports did rise from 2,800MF CFP in 1979²⁶⁰ to 4,800MF CFP by 1983. (Table 43) This increase was largely a reflection of private investment in pearl production and the rising value of this commodity on the international market at the time, movements for which the State could not plausibly claim credit. During the same period,

territorial imports rose in value from 54,800MF CFP²⁶¹ to 74,200MF CFP. (Table 43) The coverage rate of exports by imports rose slightly, from 5.1% to 6.5%.

Emmanuelli's period of administration over the DOM-TOM from 1981 to 1983 was too short to allow him to improve the situation of the poor. The dropout rates of Polynesians in schools remained far higher than those of other ethnic groups, and the French education system, run by the State and the territory, had yet to fully respond to indigenous educational needs. It was not until the Internal Autonomy Statute was promulgated in September 1984 that the State recognised the place of indigenous languages in education. Social reform had yet to radically improve the lot of slum dwellers by the early 1980s. In 1982 there were an estimated 22,000 people, around 13% of the population in French Polynesia, either in substandard housing or none at all. This was around the same figure as 13 years before.²⁶²

The wealth gap between public servants and those unemployed or in the private sector remained. In 1982 state salaries were around 25% higher than private sector ones.²⁶³ The lowering of public sector salaries through the reduction of the various benefits accorded to state servants working in French Polynesia, as well as the introduction of a progressive income tax system which would in theory generally lower high incomes, appeared imminent following Emmanuelli's policy announcements in August 1981. But in the early 1980s this did not occur as it did in New Caledonia. One reason for this reluctance was that Emmanuelli and his successors probably feared adverse local reaction. Flosse and Tahoeraa Huiraatira's opposition to tax reform was well known. In any case, after the establishment of greater territorial powers under the Internal Autonomy Statute, the State devolved initiative to such policy initiatives to the Territorial Government.

Although private sector wage levels were increased by raising minimum wages in the 1980s, Socialist Governments did not reduce state employee remuneration to the level of that of the private sector. While the Territorial Government abstained from taking this initiative for its employees too, it should be recognised that the remuneration of territorial public servants was fixed following the rates offered to their state counterparts. Having established salary parameters, it behove Paris to take the initiative and begin to reduce them. Reluctance to cut the higher wages state servants in the TOM received was partly caused by unwillingness to raise the ire of state sector unions. They and the Territorial Government would have attacked such a move as centralised, authoritarian direction, and would have promoted opposition and controversy which might have damaged state-territorial relations. In the absence of significant support for the PS in French Polynesia during the early 1980s, Socialist Governments acted cautiously.

In 1989, the average monthly wage in agriculture, forestry and fishery work was 115,379F CFP, compared with 175,358F CFP for administration.²⁶⁴ In this respect, egalitarian Socialist sentiments were not to be put into practice from 1981. They have at times been reiterated in more recent years, but *sans lendemain*. During his visit to French Polynesia from 15 to 18 May 1990, Mitterrand offered lofty sentiments echoing those of Emmanuelli nine years before:

Enfin, rien ne sera construit sans l'harmonie sociale, laquelle repose, il faut s'en convaincre, sur une répartition équilibrée des fruits de la croissance, une juste distribution des chances, une plus grande égalité. [...] La recherche d'une plus grande équité oblige à s'interroger sur les moyens de réduire les inégalités inhérentes aux structures économiques et sociales. [...] Voyez le problème très difficile de la fiscalité. Le système fiscal polynésien fondé presque exclusivement sur la consommation ne peut guère répondre à l'obligation d'une plus juste répartition des richesses. Il faudra bien un jour, aux conditions que

vous [le territoire] définissez et en l'adaptant aux réalités locales, introduire une fiscalité sur les revenus.²⁶⁵

That Socialist leaders not taken the opportunity in the 1980s to bring about these social changes, through the introduction of personal income tax before the promulgation of the Internal Autonomy Statute, and by lowering the salaries of state employees, passed unobserved in the presidential speech.

In the absence of other sources of income, the Territorial Government continued to impose tariffs on imported goods, and the cost of living consequently remained high. The private sector continued to be disadvantaged in the remuneration it could offer, and was therefore less attractive to locals, who preferred to work for the State or the territory in administrative posts. The agricultural workforce declined as a percentage of the population in paid employment, while the tertiary and secondary sectors increased slightly. In 1980, 5% of paid workers were engaged in the primary sector, compared with 21% in the secondary sector, and 74% in the tertiary sector. By 1990, the balance had gone to 3%, 22% and 75% respectively.²⁶⁶ This balance had largely been determined before 1981, and was not to any great extent affected by reforms since that year.

Socio-economic policy under Lemoine from 1983 to 1986 progressed along the lines of already-established plans. Due to the preoccupation that statute negotiations represented for the State and the territory,²⁶⁷ social reform took a back seat during this period. One major social reform however was a housing scheme created in 1983 under a new organisation, the Territorial Reconstruction Agency. This effort was made only after cyclone damage had rendered imperative a new public housing plan.²⁶⁸ From 1983 to 1986, around 2,000 destroyed houses were rebuilt, and around 6,000 damaged ones were repaired using funds from this agency, at a cost of approximately 7,000MF CFP.²⁶⁹ Another project in 1983 aimed to restart the commercial production of vanilla, to the point that 130ha of vanilla trees would eventually be under cultivation, enabling the harvesting of 150t of vanilla by 1990. The project was funded to a level of 33% by EC development funds, 24% by the Territory, and 43% by vanilla producers.²⁷⁰ As is discussed below, actual production fell far short of these expectations.

The extension of social welfare, housing plans, training and re-employment schemes, as well as the promotion of investment in tourism, manufacturing, aquaculture and agriculture, were priorities confirmed by Chirac and Flosse for the period of cohabitation from March 1986. In Papeete on 26 September 1985 Chirac accused Socialist reforms of not having been forceful enough to halt territorial social and economic stagnation.²⁷¹ To some extent, this was true. There had been no export-led recovery from 1981 to 1986. The coverage rate of imports by exports had only risen slightly from 5.1% in 1979 to 5.5% by 1986. (Table 43) Ia Mana's and Mitterrand's declared hopes in 1981 of bringing about fundamental changes in the territory's social and economic structure remained unfulfilled five years later. For example, the unemployment rate had increased from 11.2% in 1983 to 15.0% in 1988.²⁷² Job creation could not keep pace with the number of school leavers entering the labour market, resulting in rising youth unemployment.²⁷³ The RPR none the less excessively belittled the role of Socialist Governments in supporting territorial development, heaping praise on Flosse and his colleagues while neglecting to mention that their greater control over territorial development was the result of the creation of the Internal Autonomy Statute, and underestimating the importance of state development funding and expertise in the fields of agriculture and aquaculture.²⁷⁴

The Chirac Government displayed a restrained approach to French Polynesian development which differed from its reaction to New Caledonia. It did not dissolve various agencies established since 1981 as it did in New

Caledonia, perhaps because there were fewer to dissolve, but also because their role was not as politicised as those of the Land Office and the various bodies promoting Kanak culture. There was to be no bickering over development funding comparable to that which took place between the three regions administered by the FLNKS and Paris.

In Flosse, Chirac had a party representative who not only dominated the Territorial Government, but who also agreed with his socio-economic policies. Notably absent from this platform was the proposed introduction of personal income tax, or the reduction of public sector salaries in line with those of the private sector. On 15 April 1986 Flosse announced the reform policies of his Territorial Government under cohabitation, which were in fact no different from those of the Eighth Plan. Paradoxically in a territory so dependent on state funding and with little modern heritage of vigorous entrepreneurialism, Flosse stressed the importance of private enterprise, with the qualification that "le libéralisme doit être tempéré par un certain interventionnisme justifié par l'intérêt général."²⁷⁵ He thus declared that the Territorial Government would continue its reliance on state funding, and in turn would retain its willingness to fund the social welfare system, and future local development projects. Flosse announced his intention of expanding territorial energy sources, work which had in any case been progressing since the 1970s. His declaration that the territory would become more self-sufficient in food harked back to the Eighth Plan, as did his comments that agricultural exports would be increased, fisheries exploitation would expand, small business would be encouraged, and tourism would be promoted. That such policies needed to be reiterated showed how little progress had been made since the Eighth Plan had been drawn up. Nor was the source of revenue for this work original: Flosse stated he would approach Paris for more development funding.

Apparent in the orientations for territorial development offered by Flosse was an absence of original thinking. While the Territorial Government had attained a degree of administrative autonomy, it showed no signs of exercising any political autonomy in formulating new approaches to socio-economic development issues. No independent study of territorial development was undertaken while Flosse was President. Fundamental elements upon which the goal of increasing the weight of market capitalism in the territory hinged were left unconsidered. Balancing economic liberalism with interventionism would be no mean feat. If economic liberalism was the goal, what was the point of continuing to spend territorial revenue propping up a commercially unviable agricultural sector?²⁷⁶ If protectionism was the goal, why were local agricultural producers still open to competition from imported foodstuffs, including certain supposedly essential items (such as coffee) which were declared exempt from customs duties? The dependence of the Territorial Government on customs duties from imports was problematic in the context of striving for economic liberalism. If the Territorial Government actually did manage to establish a diversified, more self-reliant local economy, it would be cutting its own fiscal throat. The target of import substitution threatened territorial revenue. In the unlikely event that local food production was revived for example, a corresponding decline in food imports would deprive the territory of funding. The continued funding of social services would be rendered difficult if territorial revenue dropped greatly. The Territorial Government could resort to borrowing more money from the State although this activity would appear out of place in the context of a self-sufficiency drive. Another major issue to confront was how the territory was to bring about a redeployment of the skilled workforce from the public to the private sector. With the implementation of increased territorial self-administration under the Internal Autonomy Statute, the tendency had been not to diminish the number of local bureaucrats but to increase it. There was little incentive for locals to show interest in the uncertainties of private enterprise when an expanding public service still offered better employment opportunities.

Table 44. Tourism in French Polynesia 1984-1991

	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Total Visitors	101,595	122,086	161,238	142,820	135,387	139,705	132,361	120,938

Sources: IEOM: *Exercice 1988. Rapport d'activité 1988. Polynésie française* p.108, *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.37.

State planning until 1986 had not managed to master the complicated challenges to increased territorial self-sufficiency. There was little reason to think that a sudden change would be brought about by the Territorial Government if it employed the same reform orientations.

Measures undertaken by the Territorial Government did not address deeper structural issues, but instead involved only minor organisational changes. From 1986 the reorganisation of territorial employment services was undertaken, including the introduction of new employment schemes, and the announcement of an intensification and diversification of professional training services.²⁷⁷ When faced with intractable social troubles in unemployment and housing, the Territorial Government passed on its responsibilities to Paris. In response to territorial calls for assistance, from December 1987, the State took charge of family allowances, formerly administered by the territory, budgeted for the annual construction of 250 state houses, and reimbursed the victims of the Papeete riot of October 1987.²⁷⁸ As a Deputy for French Polynesia, Fritch had complained to the National Assembly in October 1987 that the Territorial Government had inadequate state funding to meet its target of the construction of 500 houses per year, a goal in itself unable to satisfy the needs of the local population.²⁷⁹ The Territorial Government was having trouble addressing the situation of the rural population. Fritch in addition pointed out difficulties with the Social Protection Regime for the Rural Milieu. This social welfare scheme, established in February 1979 by the Territorial Assembly, was designed to support rural inhabitants with family benefits, sickness benefits, accident compensation and pensions, and was funded by both the State and the territory. The Territorial Government had been incapable of keeping the fund out of deficit from 1983, due to the rapid increase in the number of beneficiaries. Their total rose from 4,845 in 1982 to 8,234 in 1986. From 1983, the Territorial Government had been constrained to subsidise the fund with its budget surplus and transfers of funds originally allocated to other portfolios. Fritch called for greater state funding, which was given to the territory.²⁸⁰ Communal funding was another area of contention, with Fritch calling for increased state participation in the Intercommunal Equalisation Fund.²⁸¹ The 1988 budget for the DOM-TOM failed to meet Fritch's requests in this respect. There was a limit to the extent to which the State was prepared to act for the Territorial Government.

Under cohabitation necessary work continued on the improvement of territorial infrastructure. The extension of electrification to the outer islands was an important aspect of this activity. By 1988, 28 of the 75 inhabited islands in French Polynesia had electric power.²⁸² The establishment of the Papeete campus of the French University of the South Pacific on 29 May 1987 was a high point in infrastructural development: the campus would offer French Polynesians unable to afford tertiary education in metropolitan France the means to gain higher qualifications.²⁸³ Construction of the university branch began in 1988. Plans for the establishment of a French university in the Pacific TOM dated back to the 1961,²⁸⁴ and preparatory discussions on the subject had been in progress under the Fabius Government. None the less the foundation of the university reflected well on the efforts of Flosse.

Although such infrastructural work improved French Polynesia's situation during the period of cohabitation, French and Territorial Government policy expectations concerning economic growth were not met. Instead, the territorial economy declined in 1987, a trend which lasted beyond the end of cohabitation in 1988. Of particular concern was the decline in tourism. Arrivals fell from 161,238 in 1986 to 142,820 in 1987. By 1991 the annual total was down to 120,938. (Table 44) This trend was contrary to the growth in tourism experienced by other South Pacific destinations. From 1987 to 1990, Fiji enjoyed a 47% increase in the number of tourist arrivals. Numbers rose 50% in New Caledonia, and 139% in Vanuatu.²⁸⁵ There was universal agreement that

the high cost of living in French Polynesia was a deterrent to travellers. The Papeete riot of October 1987 also deterred clientele, as did the declining values of the US, Australian and New Zealand dollars compared to the French Pacific Franc in the early 1990s.²⁸⁶

Agricultural reforms appeared handicapped by the inability of French development techniques to effect changes in the Polynesian tribal milieu. Agricultural exports such as copra diminished due to falling prices on the international market.²⁸⁷ The encouragement of cash cropping stood as a major priority for territorial development but, as in Wallis and Futuna, it struck the barrier of traditional Polynesian agricultural techniques. State and territorial agricultural agents have experienced difficulty in convincing Maohi farmers to abandon traditional forms of land tenure and cultivation for modern, commercially viable farms, as was intended under the Eighth Plan.²⁸⁸ Maohi farmers were unenthusiastic to see the break-up of family orientated, subsistence polycultural farming by the incursion of large-scale monocultural cash cropping.²⁸⁹ This conservatism, combined with the comparatively small areas of agricultural land in French Polynesia (totalling 10.36% of the territory's land surface in 1987),²⁹⁰ and its physical dispersion over distances of thousands of kilometres limited the development of strong commercial agriculture.²⁹¹

Unfulfilled expectations of socio-economic change were an important motive for the cabinet revolt led by Alexandre Léontieff in December 1987. In 1988 Léontieff led negotiations with the Rocard Government for a new bout of development arrangements under the Tenth Plan, from 1989 to 1993. The aims of the new state-territorial contract under the Tenth Plan had a distinct ring of familiarity about them when Maurice Porchon, government reporter for the Finance Commission, announced them to the National Assembly on 13 November 1988:

En Polynésie, le Gouvernement va signer un contrat de plan entre l'Etat et les collectivités du territoire. Les orientations prioritaires sont les suivantes: développement des infrastructures de communication; renforcement des moyens de formation et de recherche - création de cinq collèges et deux lycées; action en faveur des demandeurs d'emploi, des personnes âgées et des handicapés; développement de l'habitat social - le logement pose un problème absolument crucial dans l'ensemble des départements et territoires d'outre-mer; promotion des activités productives - en particulier développement de la pêche, aménagement d'un nouveau complexe - et touristiques, avec un renforcement de la desserte aérienne avec le Japon.²⁹²

The new State-Territory Contract Plan was signed on 11 January 1989. It differed from those which preceded it only in emphasis, its content having been determined by previous plans. Its first priority was the improvement of territorial training and research facilities. The State was to provide 12,977MF CFP for higher education, of which 6,385MF CFP would be administered by the State, and 6,541MF CFP would be allocated to the territory. These funds would enable the construction of five colleges, two lycées and new university facilities, not mentioned in the quote above. Centres for professional and apprentice training were to be opened, along with five units offering refresher courses which would enable easy entry to these centres.²⁹³

The second priority was the expansion of territorial agriculture and fisheries. For this area 2,073MF CFP was set aside, including 1,036MF CFP to be administered by the State, and 855MF CFP by the territory. Fisheries would be boosted by the construction of a modern fishing base in the Marquesas, which would service a flotilla of 18 tuna boats. Here, the aim was to allow local fishermen to go beyond lagoon fishing to work on the high seas.²⁹⁴ On land, the project's aim was to create 300 commercial farms, extend the network of fruit and vegetable market gardening, and to encourage commercial logging.²⁹⁵

The third priority of the Contract Plan was the improvement of the territorial air network and roading.²⁹⁶

Somewhere further down the list the Contract Plan addressed ongoing housing problems. The Territorial Office for Public Housing had found itself unable to reduce the spread of substandard housing and the growth in the number of homeless in the late 1980s. The period of the Tenth Plan involved the establishment by the State and territory of a new partly-public company, Fare de France, which was assigned the task of constructing 1,000 houses from 1989 to 1993.²⁹⁷ By the end of 1991, 360 houses had been built, although the programme was running behind schedule and it was uncertain whether its target would be met on time.²⁹⁸ In 1993 the period of the Tenth Plan was just coming to a conclusion. The goal of constructing 200 houses per year was far from having been attained, with an average of 137 houses completed since 1989. The realisation of the Office's goals was hindered by funding shortfalls during a period of increasing financial problems for the territory.²⁹⁹ The plan which follows will necessarily have to cover some of the same ground as its predecessor.

While state and territorial administrators have overseen the progressive improvement of social welfare measures, the modernisation of territorial infrastructure and services, and have continued providing subsidies and technical support for the recovery of local production in agriculture, fisheries and manufacturing, French Polynesia's economic situation did not radically change from 1981 to 1991. Territorial dependence on metropolitan France persisted in the form of imports and subsidies, as well as administrative and technical services.

In 1981, Mitterrand had called for the dismantling of French Polynesia's "bureaucratie galopante".³⁰⁰ Eight years later it was still racing on, unimpeded. The number of state and territorial public servants in French Polynesia increased from 13,537 in 1977³⁰¹ to 24,347 by 1989.³⁰² This increase reflected the need for additional personnel to oversee development schemes implemented since the announcement of the Eighth Plan, and the increased number of territorial personnel required because of greater territorial administrative autonomy. Administrative costs consumed most of the revenue of the Territorial Government in 1990. That year the territorial budget (excluding state funds) amounted to 76,830MF CFP, of which 59,730MF CFP (77.74%) were allocated to administrative costs.³⁰³ Seven years after Mitterrand's election, the Territorial Government still fitted his description of it in 1981 as "un perpétuel quémendeur de subsides"³⁰⁴ from the State. The territory resorted to state funding to complement its own revenue. In 1988, the territorial budget amounted to 72,000MF CFP, which was supplemented by 103,750MF CFP contributed by Paris.³⁰⁵ French Polynesia's level of bureaucracy and its financial dependence on Paris had not been broken during Mitterrand's first septennate.

It is unlikely that French Polynesia will break out of its dependence on imported goods and be able to revive local production given territorial reliance on tariffs from imported goods. In 1989, income from such tariffs contributed 43.68% of territorial revenue, the largest single source of direct revenue, well ahead of company tax, which provided 11.1%.³⁰⁶ Although imports dropped from 46.9% of territorial GDP in 1981 to 30.9% in 1989,³⁰⁷ the monetary value of these imports rose in real terms³⁰⁸ as well as in face value. (Table 43) The rising value of imported goods characteristic of the 1980s should continue in the 1990s. In the short term, it is more profitable for the Territorial Government to experience an increase in imports rather than a reduction.³⁰⁹

Public servants in French Polynesia did not dominate the cash economy to the extent that they did in Wallis and Futuna, and the economic influence of civil servants had yet to be overshadowed by those in the primary and secondary sectors. Overall state and territorial administrative spending constituted 59% of

territorial GDP in 1980.³¹⁰ The marginal decline of the primary and secondary employment sectors to the advantage of tertiary employment since 1981, which the Eighth Plan hoped to avoid, has been noted. In French Polynesia administrators remained greater contributors to the cash economy than workers in agriculture, aquaculture or manufacturing. This was an imbalance which the Eighth Plan had hoped to see overturned but which showed no sign of changing by the late 1980s. In 1988, public servants represented 35.58% of the territorial workforce in paid employment among whom state servants represented 11.33%, territorial employees 16.77%, and communal employees 7.47%.³¹¹ Those working in administration received 54.4% of salaries paid in French Polynesia in 1989.³¹² Administrators' salaries constituted 28.24% of territorial GDP that year.³¹³ Those in agriculture, on the other hand, comprised 8.77% of the territorial workforce, artisanal workers 14.7%, industrial workers 9.46%, and fishermen 2.59%.³¹⁴ These occupations fell within the "others" category given, which accounted for 9.8% of salaries paid in 1989.³¹⁵ The average salary for those in state and territorial administration was much higher than the average payments offered to those in agriculture, fishing, manufacturing and handicrafts. In 1990, average monthly salaries for public servants ranged from 135,148F CFP for the lowest grade to 305,961F CFP for the highest grade.³¹⁶ Industrial workers received average monthly salaries ranging from 89,500F CFP to 92,100F CFP.³¹⁷ Civilian and military administrative expenditure in French Polynesia dropped during the 1980s, but remained considerable. It averaged around 28% of territorial GDP from 1981 to 1985, and around 25% from 1986 to 1990.³¹⁸ Overall, state expenditure fell from 40% of territorial GDP in 1981 to 34% in 1989.³¹⁹ While this trend amounted to a minor percentile drop of 0.75% per annum, actual spending continued to rise.

The historically declining commercial productivity of the agricultural sector has not abated since 1981. The Eighth Plan's goal of territorial self-sufficiency in food³²⁰ was far from having been realised by the beginning of the 1990s. In 1990, French Polynesia relied on imported foodstuffs to fulfil around 80% of its requirements.³²¹ Under these conditions French Polynesia appeared unlikely to become a significant food exporter to markets in the Pacific basin. In 1989, food products accounted for 3.17% of the total value of French Polynesian exports.³²² Major inroads had yet to be made by meat and vegetable exports on the Japanese and New Zealand markets, as the Eighth Plan had optimistically projected.³²³ In the early 1990s, Japan was more important as a market for French Polynesian pearls than for foodstuffs.³²⁴ Japan retained a protectionist stance towards its agriculture into the early 1990s, presenting various trade barriers to countries wishing to export foodstuffs there.³²⁵ Export marketing to New Zealand was still embryonic. The first French Polynesian trade delegation arrived in New Zealand only in November 1991, to promote beer, vanilla, pearls and fruits.³²⁶ Inauspiciously the delegation's 100kg selection of fruit was unable to be displayed: it had been confiscated by New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries inspectors for not having been fumigated to their satisfaction.³²⁷ The incapacity to meet Australian and New Zealand phyto-sanitary regulations has been a major barrier, not only to French Polynesian producers, but also to New Caledonian producers.³²⁸

Government technical and financial assistance for French Polynesian agriculture has not encouraged the productive successes hoped for. Copra production in the 1980s did not come close to exceeding tonnage produced in the 1970s. Total territorial production exported from 1969 to 1979 came to 115,178t, while in the decade that followed the export total was 80,968t.³²⁹ Owing to international market fluctuations, and to damage caused by cyclones in 1983, annual exported copra production declined from 11,815t in 1980 to a low of 3,010t in 1984, climbed to 9,278t in 1988, plummeted once more to 5,817t in 1988, and climbed to 10,090t by 1991.³³⁰ Unsteady prices on the

international market have been offset by territorial subsidies for producers and price guarantees unchanged since 1986. Copra exports were hindered by problems such as ageing processing equipment and poor quality control, resulting in inferior product compared to other major producers such as Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea.³³¹ Without subsidies, copra exports from French Polynesia would surely have collapsed.

Fresh fruit production in French Polynesia has mainly climbed throughout the 1980s, although most of this output served local needs rather than being exported. In 1986 7,254t of fruit were produced for sale,³³² of which only 18t were exported.³³³ In 1989, commercial fruit production amounted to 8,970t,³³⁴ of which 189t were exported.³³⁵ Attempts at exporting fruit juice to mainland France were abandoned in 1991 due to high shipping costs, lack of market image and higher production costs than competing products on the metropolitan market.³³⁶

The revival of vanilla production did not live up to expectations. The ambitious cultivation programme which began in 1983 resulted in production over the following seven years of just 21.8t of the 150t of prepared vanilla targeted by 1990.³³⁷ Vanilla exports were far from reaching the triple figure tonnages exported annually in the early 1960s. In 1980 2t were exported, rising to 5t in 1983 when international prices rose, although exports had fallen slightly to 4t by 1989. The reason for the lack of commercial success was that EC and territorial funding did not meet planned levels, and international prices for vanilla fell in the late 1980s. State and territorial officials have responded by formulating a follow-up programme which was projected to last until the late 1990s.³³⁸

Coffee, a commodity which had not been exported in any great quantity since the 1960s, has likewise failed to fulfil the expectations placed on it by state and territorial development officials. Its decline found a close parallel in the decline of coffee exports from New Caledonia. An exporter in the early 1960s, French Polynesia imported coffee in bulk during the 1980s. In 1990, coffee imports amounted to 373t.³³⁹ Under the Tenth Plan, it was intended to have raised annual territorial production to the modest level of 15t of coffee by 1993.³⁴⁰ All of this coffee was intended for the local market. By 1991, local production had reached 13t.³⁴¹ Coffee producers have many years of work ahead before they might regain their former status of minor suppliers to the international market.

Aquaculture expanded to a greater degree than agriculture in the 1980s. Export levels and profits in the pearl industry rose rapidly during the 1980s. Exports climbed from 86.53kg in 1981³⁴² to 833.46kg in 1991.³⁴³ In the early 1990s pearl farming was the cornerstone for the economic activities of around thirty islands in French Polynesia, employing around 2,000 people.³⁴⁴ Pearls were the single largest export earner for the territory: in 1991, they accounted for around 33.7% by value of French Polynesian exports. (Table 43) Their value rose from 997.83MF CFP in 1986³⁴⁵ to 4,424.32MF CFP in 1991.³⁴⁶ The pearl industry stood as an untypical local commercial success story which owed a great deal to the perseverance and marketing skills of a small number of local entrepreneurs, and to the local abundance of sheltered lagoons with suitable micro-climates.

Pearls were the only product from French Polynesia's maritime zone to enjoy such commercial success. Slow progress has been made in expanding the territorial fishing industry beyond artisanal level, particularly with the deep sea fishing fleet being created under the Tenth Plan. The first two vessels of this fleet were in service in 1991, but deep sea fishing by local vessels has yet to be developed to the point where it would be more profitable to the territory than revenue from fishing accords with Japan and Korea. Deep sea fishing, as elsewhere in the Pacific TOM, is still mainly the domain of foreign vessels because of the lack of suitable local vessels, a convenient market, storage

facilities, and qualified labour.³⁴⁷ Artisanal fishing in lagoons and in coastal zones was still important by 1991, with around 80% of fishing licenses authorised by the territory going to small fishing operations.³⁴⁸

After pearl farming, tourism has been the other area of major economic growth during the 1980s, although it has not lived up to the expectations placed upon it in Paris and Papeete either. By the early 1990s the level of tourist-related activity in the territory had still not exceeded the Sixth Plan's projection for 1975 of 7,000 hotel rooms for the territory, to be used by 240,000 tourists, who would enable the employment of 7,000 locals in tourism.³⁴⁹ Nor had it come close to Flosse's projection in April 1986 that by 1990 there would be 200,000 annual tourist arrivals, enabling the employment of 8,000 people in tourism.³⁵⁰ With tourist arrivals in French Polynesia totalling 120,938 in 1991, (Table 44) a territorial hotel capacity of 2,824 rooms,³⁵¹ and with 5,200 people employed in tourism,³⁵² a large gap between official expectation and reality becomes evident. The highest annual number of visitors to the territory was 161,238, achieved in 1986. (Table 44) Tourism constituted less than 5% of territorial GDP in 1991, but was nevertheless considered the most important productive sector of French Polynesia's economy.³⁵³ In spite of experiencing considerable albeit intermittent growth in the number of tourist arrivals during the 1980s, tourism is still vulnerable to international market trends. There was a substantial drop in the number of North American, European and Japanese tourists in 1990 and 1991 which impacted negatively on French Polynesian tourism. Potential visitors from these countries decided to avoid overseas holidays at the time of the Gulf War for fear of being subjected to terrorist attacks.³⁵⁴ The total number of visitors to the islands dropped from 132,361 in 1990 to 120,938 in 1991. Both of these totals were lower than the 1989 total of 139,705 visitors. (Table 44) As already discussed, French Polynesia was also disadvantaged compared to other South Pacific destinations because of its high prices.

Since the 1960s the territory had promoted the expansion of hotel accommodation in order to increase tourist revenue. From the late 1980s, some of the large developments planned encountered local opposition. A 250-room Sheraton hotel with a golf course was proposed for Moorea in 1988 by Japanese investors. This project encountered opposition from citizens' groups on the islands. In June 1991, Moorea residents blocked the proposal by voting against it in a local referendum.³⁵⁵ A self-contained 2,000-room tourist village planned for Bora Bora, with 2,000 rooms, was also delayed by locals who objected to its presence.³⁵⁶ Local objections to tourist projects were not as entrenched as in Wallis and Futuna, where custom authority has been able to openly veto resort proposals, but such residential opposition has slowed investment in what the territory and the State saw as a crucial sector for the islands' economic growth. As in the late 1970s, tourism held great income potential for French Polynesia, although investment in the territory in the early 1990s had yet to meet the expectations of two decades earlier.

Indigenous opposition has been a factor in the long delay of the recommencement of phosphate production in French Polynesia. In the middle of the 1970s, a large deposit of phosphate was discovered on Mataiva Atoll.³⁵⁷ Plans to exploit the deposit have been conditioned by market studies which judged the deposit unprofitable in the face of competition from Nauru. It was decided in the late 1970s that Australia and New Zealand constituted the only profitable markets for Mataiva phosphate. They would not be interested in purchasing it until cheaper supplies from Nauru were nearly exhausted, which should occur early in the twenty-first century.³⁵⁸ Successive Territorial Governments have inherited the portfolio, and have shelved phosphate exploitation for this reason, as well as because of legal problems over deciding who should receive royalties from mining. Local residents formed the Mataiva Phosphate Society in September 1991 to retain control over local resources.³⁵⁹ Since then, the matter has been in the hands of the Territorial Government,

Table 45. French Polynesia's Population by Ethnic Group, 1988

Group	Number	% of Population
Total Population	188,814	100
Polynesians	125,532	66.5
Polynesian Demis	30,790	16.3
Europeans	19,797	10.5
Mixed Race		
Europeans ¹	2,700	1.4
Asians	7,614	4.0
Mixed Race Asians ²	1,237	0.7
Others ³	1,144	0.6

Source: ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.29.

¹ Resulting from intermarriage other than with Polynesians.

² Resulting from intermarriage other than with Polynesians or Europeans.

³ Foreigners, and those resulting from intermarriage between three or more ethnic groups.

**Table 46. French Polynesia's Population
Distribution 1983, 1988**

1983

Archipelago	Number	% of Population
Total	166,753	100
Windward Islands	123,069	73.8
Leeward Islands	19,060	11.4
Austral Islands	6,283	3.8
Marquesa Islands	6,548	3.9
Tuamotu-Gambiers	11,793	7.1

1988

Archipelago	Number	% of Population
Total	188,814	100
Windward Islands	140,341	74.3
Leeward Islands	22,232	11.8
Austral Islands	6,509	3.4
Marquesa Islands	7,358	3.9
Tuamotu-Gambiers	12,374	6.6

Source: François Sodter: "Le recensement général de la population de 1988 en Polynésie française" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.246 tome 20 no.11 mars 1989 pp.58-61.

which has not been hasty in making a decision. What form phosphate exploitation will take, or whether it will be extracted at all, remains to be seen. The deposits on Mataiva were estimated as adequate to sustain annual production of 1 to 1.2Mt annually for 12 to 15 years, valued at around 54,000MF CFP.³⁶⁰ Were phosphate mining to proceed on Mataiva, it would create around 300 jobs, and would provide an economic boom for an island with only 199 inhabitants.³⁶¹ As on Nauru, it might in addition destroy the environment to the extent of preventing future cultivation there.

Government economic development efforts on the outer islands had failed to bring a major turn-around in their economic decline by the early 1990s. Private investment in pearl farming has, as has been noted, provided employment opportunities on many islands without entailing the environmental destruction that phosphate mining would. These are happy exceptions. While state and territorial development agencies have provided millions of French Pacific Francs in development funding,³⁶² they have not brought about the economic rebirth of the island economies in question. The Leeward Islands remained economically advantaged due to their better infrastructure, larger and more highly skilled workforce, and because of Tahiti's role as the territorial administrative centre. Most of the hotels in the territory were located in the Leeward Islands, mainly on Tahiti, Moorea, Huahine and Bora Bora.³⁶³ Widespread return migration from Tahiti to the outer islands has not occurred, in spite of funding to encourage this. The percentage of the territorial population living in the Windward Islands rose marginally during the 1980s, from 73.8% of the territorial population in 1983 to 74.3% of the population in 1988. (Table 46) The Leeward Islands' proportion of territorial population increased from 11.4% in 1983 to 11.8% five years later. While the percentile figure for the Marquesas remained around 3.9%, the figures for the other outer islands declined slightly over the same period. That of the Austral Islands declined from 3.8% to 3.4%, and the Tuamotu-Gambiers fell from 7.1% to 6.6%. In the 1980s demographic centralisation in French Polynesia had reached its plateau.

Lying around 1,500km to the northwest of Papeete, the Marquesas were still comparatively isolated, although they were better served by external air and sea links than Futuna. Development work in the archipelago resulted in electrification, running water and telecommunication facilities, but the local economy was still dominated by traditional agriculture, with the population alternating between subsistence agriculture and paid seasonal work.³⁶⁴ In 1993, the implications of the establishment of the deep sea fishing base two years before had yet to be fully felt. This activity should provide a boost to the local cash economy during the 1990s.

The shape of infrastructural development on the outer islands has varied, as has the form of economic development there. The Tuamotu and Gambier Islands still had insufficient shipping links, both internally and with the rest of the territory, although local needs in electricity and running water had been met.³⁶⁵ Pearl harvesting and copra production were the major primary activities on the islands,³⁶⁶ although the value of these was dwarfed by the size of state investment in nuclear testing facilities on Moruroa and Fangataufa. While the Austral Islands, with their temperate climate and rich soils, remained the biggest food producers in the territory, exports were hindered by the islands' distance from Tahiti, the largest territorial market, which lies between 500km and 1,000km away. The growth of commercial production has been slowed by inadequate marketing as well as by the unwillingness of local farmers to abandon traditional systems of land tenure and cultivation.³⁶⁷

The populations of the outer islands tended to experience high rates of what by European criteria was considered to be unemployment, owing to the limited penetration of the territorial cash economy. Unemployment statistics were incapable of summarising this situation, because they did not count those living outside the cash economy, who may have been employed in subsistence

farming, but who did not have steady cash incomes. In 1988, the Windward Islands had an unemployment rate of 9.8% of those in the paid workforce. The rate was 10.1% in the Leeward Islands, 12.2% in the Marquesas, and 17.9% in the Austral Islands. The Tuamotu and Gambier Islands were the exception to the rule, with only 4.7% of the paid workforce unemployed, thanks to the presence there of CEP facilities, and because of the extent of local pearl and copra operations.³⁶⁸

French Polynesia's population remained handicapped by its low educational attainment levels. Attempts to improve the education of indigenous inhabitants during the 1980s, through the opening of new schools, training institutes and the university, brought about reductions in the low success rate of full Polynesians and Asians compared to Europeans in the education system. In 1983, 19.5% of Polynesians aged 10 years and over had reached secondary level education, compared to 53.0% of Europeans and 39.0% of Asians.³⁶⁹ For the same age group, that year 0.5% of Polynesians had reached higher education, compared to 17.5% of Europeans and 4.0% of Asians.³⁷⁰ The Polynesian participation rate in secondary education had rapidly improved by the late 1980s, although they were still behind those of Europeans and Asians in French Polynesia. In 1988 40.7% of Polynesians aged 10 years and over had received secondary education. At tertiary level, the participation rate of Polynesians had dropped slightly to 0.4%.³⁷¹ By way of comparison, 67.2% of local Europeans aged 10 years and over had received secondary level education, and 20.7% had experienced tertiary level education, although this last figure was high because of the presence of metropolitan French CEP technicians, military personnel and administrators.³⁷² Of the territory's Asians aged 10 years and over, 52.3% had received secondary education, and 6.9% had reached tertiary level education, suggesting that Polynesians were not the only group which was educationally disadvantaged.³⁷³ Progress in achieving the Eighth Plan's goal of improving the educations of DOM-TOM inhabitants was noticeable but disparities between ethnic groups persisted.³⁷⁴

While Polynesian participation in higher education was not as high as that of other ethnic groups in French Polynesia, Polynesian culture made inroads in state and territorial curricula. From 1990, the Papeete branch of the French University of the South Pacific offered a bachelor's level degree in Te reo Maohi. In Paris, it has been possible to study for a bachelor's level degree in Tahitian since 1992.³⁷⁵ In 1993, it was too early to speculate on the success of these courses. There existed a shortage both in qualified teachers and in qualified students for them.³⁷⁶ It can be said that these courses offered a recognition of Polynesian culture in the state higher education system which has been slower in arriving than that accorded to Basque, Breton, Occitan or Corsican language.

Although slightly reduced, the socio-economic issues which confronted French Polynesia in 1981 were largely unchanged ten years later. Low territorial self-sufficiency, lack of productive diversity in agriculture and light industry, an external trade balance tilted heavily towards a high level of French imports, and the failure to produce an export-led economic recovery, were all elements considered to be developmental problems in Papeete and Paris which had been resolved neither by the State, nor by the Territorial Government. Nor were these obstacles likely to be eliminated when there existed no political will either in Papeete or in Paris to curb expenditure on an ever-expanding bureaucracy, to diminish territorial reliance on import tariffs and trade barriers so that the cost of living might be lowered and local investment might be encouraged, to lower the attractiveness of 'unproductive' administrative posts by cutting salaries and benefits to public servants, or to solve the conundrum of whether local commercial agriculture was to be fully protected or left to fade away. From the late 1980s French Polynesia was to find its situation complicated by further difficulties, stemming from the increasing instability and profligate spending of

its Territorial Government, as well as from Paris's decision in April 1992 to suspend nuclear testing, the cornerstone of local economic activity.

Crises in the 1990s

Mitterrand's second septennate as President coincided with a trying period for French Polynesia. At the very time when political, social and economic tensions diminished in New Caledonia under the Matignon Accords, the situation in French Polynesia appeared to be worsening. Regardless of the outcome of demands from Papeete for greater self-administration through the legislation and implementation of the Internal Autonomy Statute, political problems persisted.

Into the 1990s French Polynesian internal administration continued to be hampered by the instability of the territorial political class. Infighting among the personalities at the head of major local political formations resulted in serious disruptions for Territorial Governments. Mismanagement and allegations of corruption at the highest level brought widespread discredit to the leaders of the main political groups, as well as affecting the administration of the territory. On top of this, the suspension of the CEP's nuclear programme in April 1992 brought about a decline in territorial revenue from the main contributor to the local economy, leaving territorial leaders with serious doubts about the financial viability of French Polynesia in the twenty-first century.

This concluding section examines the series of political crises the territory has faced since late 1988, and assesses the effects they have had on local political life. That the Internal Autonomy Statute had not permitted greater local administrative stability was not necessarily because this legislation was faulty. Rather, the troubles confronting French Polynesia were the reflection of inherent drawbacks in the outlooks of leaders in Paris and Papeete. Having obtained internal autonomy, territorial leaders have shown precious little maturity or responsibility in exercising it. Excessive spending on faulty development plans that have left the territory burdened by rising debt has not offered the road to greater self-reliance. Nor does the countermeasure adopted to resolve this impasse - the solicitation of more funds from the State - seem likely to remedy the situation. For its part, Paris has not greatly helped to discourage territorial mismanagement. Both before and since the attainment of French Polynesian internal autonomy, Paris has been inept in curtailing what Mitterrand referred to in 1981 as galloping bureaucracy in the territory. The installation of the CEP contributed to the collapse of local agriculture and encouraged the growth of a service economy. The granting of internal autonomy had the effect of contributing to the expansion of bureaucracy at territorial level rather than of reducing it. Plans to wean French Polynesia from its dependence on metropolitan French funds, whether in the form of finance accrued from the presence of the CEP, or of imported metropolitan French consumer goods, have been of marginal success while the nuclear test programme remained in place, and territorial revenue depended largely on import tariffs.

The incapacity of governments in Paris and in Papeete to live up to their pronouncements on the desirability of territorial self-sufficiency stemmed from the political dispositions accompanying territorial social and economic dependence on metropolitan France. Paris was not prepared, or indeed able, to effect a reduction of territorial reliance on metropolitan French funds so long as national defence policy required the presence of the CEP in French Polynesia. Papeete, on the other hand, was not prepared to inflict on itself the austerity measures necessary as a prelude to any real drive towards economic independence when it could have recourse to funding from a French State desirous of maintaining local socio-economic stability so that the CEP could function smoothly. Whether these dispositions are likely to be abandoned in the immediate future will depend on the projected role of the CEP in the French Polynesian economy. As has been the case since the arrival of the CEP in 1963,

the future of French Polynesia within the Fifth Republic into the twenty-first century will hinge on considerations of national defence. Whatever the course of events, the future socio-economic health of the territory will be mainly determined in Paris. Territorial leaders will find themselves, as they have since the beginning of the Fifth Republic, having to adapt as best they are able in the face of changing circumstances largely beyond their control.

Various attempts by Territorial Governments to stimulate the local economy have, like those initiated in Paris, not managed to stimulate major advances towards a self-sufficient territorial economy. Hopes in December 1987 that the technocratic abilities of Alexandre Léontieff would produce a turn-around in the French Polynesian socio-economic situation through initiatives at territorial level turned out to be misplaced. The resolution by Léontieff of territorial demands through the negotiation of the statute amendments of July 1990 was the high point of a reform programme which produced few new positive developments. Léontieff's ambitious territorial "plan de relance", issued in November 1987, calling for the reduction of French Polynesian economic dependence, the promotion of tourism, the decentralisation of the economy, the resolution of unemployment and the housing shortage,³⁷⁷ was not realised during his period in government. The plan ended up contributing to the discredit of the Léontieff Government by driving the territory further into debt. The funding necessary to achieve Léontieff's policy goals was sought, as invariably, from Paris. His administration determined the need for approximately 517MFF in funding to fund the recovery plan.³⁷⁸ The paradoxical orientation of seeking to promote territorial self-reliance by seeking additional finance from the State was a major symptom of the assistance mentality of French Polynesian leaders. From 1987 to 1991, Léontieff followed a well-trodden policy path, funding his "plan de relance" through external borrowing.

The expectation in Papeete that moves towards self-reliance could be facilitated with financial assistance from Paris were not fulfilled. Rather than reducing territorial dependence, Léontieff overborrowed and overspent while trying to implement his ambitious reforms. Territorial borrowing rose from 3,900MF CFP in 1986 to 6,875MF CFP by 1990, of which 3,417MF CFP represented the amount outstanding on interest payments for past loans.³⁷⁹ By 1990, the Léontieff Government faced an accumulated debt of 47,198MF CFP,³⁸⁰ a figure equivalent to 81.65% of territorial revenue that year.³⁸¹ In 1991, an independent audit of territorial finances, covering the three years and four months of Léontieff's term as President, concluded that his administration had incurred a deficit of around 7,000MF CFP for 1991.³⁸² In addition the report claimed that his administration had overspent on an excessively large bureaucracy that should have been reduced, and had indulged in questionable accounting practices.³⁸³ Under Léontieff moreover, the territory was spendthrift with public funds. For example, approximately 600MF CFP were spent on celebrations for the centenary of the commune of Papeete, which were attended by Mitterrand in May 1990.³⁸⁴ Léontieff's incapacity to live up to his goals did much to undermine his reputation as an efficient technocrat.

Léontieff experienced difficulties in retaining confidence in his leadership well before it was possible to assess the financial ill-effects of his administration. A statutory crisis eventuated in 1989 as an indirect result of the defection of a member of the Léontieff Government, Enrique Braun-Ortega.³⁸⁵ On 22 June 1988, Braun-Ortega resigned as Economy and Finance Minister. He had already distanced himself from Léontieff by campaigning unsuccessfully against him for the seat of East Polynesia earlier in the same month.³⁸⁶ At the time of his resignation, Braun-Ortega cited his reasons as being "personal"³⁸⁷ but it became apparent in later months that he was motivated by disillusionment with Léontieff's reform plan, which he described as ill-conceived and vague.³⁸⁸

In November 1988, Léontieff found himself faced with majority opposition to his territorial budget for 1989 after Braun-Ortega formed a six-

member dissident faction called Ho tu Nui (the Centre Group) from Léontieff's majority in the Territorial Assembly.³⁸⁹ Antagonism towards Flosse shown by Braun-Ortega faded rapidly when Ho tu Nui allied itself with Tahoeraa Huiraatira in voting against the budget. The flexible approach that territorial leaders adopted to forming alliances was as vigorous and as irresponsible as ever. That Braun-Ortega might ally himself with Tahoeraa Huiraatira would have been unthinkable in 1987. After helping Léontieff to topple Tahoeraa Huiraatira from government in December 1987, by June 1988 Braun-Ortega had joined ranks with his old enemies. In a constitutionally dubious move on 17 November, three of Léontieff's Ministers, Kelly, Hong-Kieu and Spitz, resigned to take up places in the Territorial Assembly, displacing proxies who had become hostile to the Government. Reinforced by the return of these three government representatives to the Territorial Assembly, Léontieff was able to push the budget through with majority support. Their task having been completed, the three former Ministers were then reappointed to the Government by Léontieff on 26 November.³⁹⁰

This tactical ploy led Braun-Ortega to lay a complaint before the Administrative Tribunal. On 21 March 1989 the body declared that the Léontieff Government was illegal. It annulled the appointments of five Ministers, including the three who had performed the shuffle in November 1988. The other two affected by the decision were Louis Savoie, who had replaced Braun-Ortega as Minister of Economy and Finance, and François Nanai, who had become Minister for Transport, Urbanisation and Administration as a result of the portfolio reshuffle.³⁹¹ Léontieff had neglected to follow the procedure laid down in article 8 of the Internal Autonomy Statute, which required ministerial appointments to be ratified by a majority vote in the Territorial Assembly.³⁹²

For the rest of March, French Polynesia was without a Government, as the five remaining members were not adequate under article 5 of the Internal Autonomy Statute to form a quorate cabinet.³⁹³ By 3 April, Léontieff had finalised another cabinet team which gained the approval of the Territorial Assembly. The final holders of the five vacant posts were Boris Léontieff (Economy and Finances), Jacques Drollet (Housing and Social Affairs), Raymond van Bastolaer (Urban Affairs and General Administration), and Ioane Témauri (Agriculture and Culture), with Alexandre Léontieff as Minister of Works, Employment, Professional Training, Tourism and Sports.³⁹⁴

Just before the appointment of a new Government in April, the Territorial President appealed to the Council of State in Paris to overturn the decision to annul the previous administration. The Council and Jean Montpezat, the High Commissioner at the time, were not prepared to challenge what was a territorial matter.³⁹⁵ The Council of State did however despatch a review team to investigate complaints made by Léontieff.³⁹⁶ This investigation presaged a modification to the statute. Among the modifications to the Internal Autonomy Statute applied in July 1990, was article 101 *bis*, which permitted the Territorial President and the Territorial Assembly President to demand directly the judgement of the Administrative Tribunal, whereas previously they had had to appeal its decisions through the Council of State.³⁹⁷

The whole incident was of considerable inconvenience to Alexandre Léontieff. In the long term, Braun-Ortega's action against the Léontieff Government was more of nuisance value than constituting a serious challenge to his presidency. The action did however demonstrate the extent to which the Léontieff Government was prepared to stretch the rules to hold the opposition in check. It likewise demonstrated that the united opposition which Léontieff had managed to mobilise against Tahoeraa Huiraatira was fraying around the edges. On 14 February 1990, Vernaudeau was excluded from the Léontieff Government for having negotiated with Flosse over a possible electoral coalition after the territorial elections scheduled for 1991.³⁹⁸ The dismissal reduced Léontieff's

majority in the Territorial Assembly to 21 out of 41 seats, a narrow margin which Flosse was to attempt to overturn with the assistance of Vernaudeau.

That Léontieff's suspicions concerning Vernaudeau were well-founded was confirmed three months later. On 9 April, Flosse and Vernaudeau attempted to overturn the Léontieff Government with a no-confidence motion, majority support for which would have forced the Government's resignation. Their motion failed, with only fourteen Territorial Councillors lending their support.³⁹⁹ That day, debate in the Territorial Assembly became rowdy. The session was suspended after Flosse and Vernaudeau flooded the debating chamber with their supporters.⁴⁰⁰ Mitterrand himself later intervened to calm differences between Léontieff and Vernaudeau. After a meeting between the three at the Elysée on 31 May 1990, Vernaudeau announced that a reconciliation had occurred.⁴⁰¹ If so, it was not to last long. Vernaudeau found himself unable to accept Léontieff's conditions for his return to government, and days later announced that his political divorce with Léontieff was final.⁴⁰²

Adroit negotiations by Flosse at the time of the territorial elections of 17 March 1991 (Table 47) permitted his triumphant return, leading a new Territorial Government. Since the end of the Chirac Government in April 1988, Flosse had held no parliamentary post, either at national or at territorial level. His sole elected position was that of Mayor of Pirae. But his time had not been wasted. While he was on the sideline of territorial politics, his leadership of Tahoeraa Huiraatira faced no serious internal challenges, and he organised the party for a return to power. By early 1991 the other major local parties, from Léontieff's Te Tiarama to the Maohi nationalist Ia Mana, were subject to public disillusionment over their failure to implement the fundamental socio-economic change that had been presented by them as indispensable.

The territorial elections of March 1991 produced no absolute majority for any one party, forcing the various major parties into the usual uneasy alliances. (Table 47) These alliances were however more extensive than those in past elections. For the first time in a territorial ballot, no independent candidates were elected. This outcome presented a major break with past elections, when there had always been isolated figures elected to the Territorial Assembly on the basis of local followings.⁴⁰³ Tahoerra Huiraatira, with 18 seats, and despite its loss of four seats since 1986,⁴⁰⁴ was in a commanding position over Léontieff and Juventin, whose Union Polynésienne list gained 14 seats.⁴⁰⁵ To form a governing majority, Flosse had to rely on an alliance with Vernaudeau's Ai'a Api, which had received five seats.⁴⁰⁶ Ia Mana was snubbed by its supporters for its participation in the Léontieff Government, which was perceived by many as marking an abandonment of its nationalist goals.⁴⁰⁷ It failed to regain any of its three seats. The Maohi nationalist party Tavini Huiraatira (Serving the People),⁴⁰⁸ benefited from disaffection with Ia Mana by winning over its supporters, thereby gaining four seats. These gains represented a doubling of Tavini Huiraatira's Territorial Councillors in comparison with its 1986 result. The party received 11.3% of votes cast in the elections of 1991, and more than 5% in each of the two local constituencies, an unprecedented level of support.⁴⁰⁹

The alignments of some parties in the elections differed radically from those they had held ten years before, while others had not changed. Flosse remained Chirac's man in Papeete. His election to the territorial presidency was hailed by Chirac as a victory both for Flosse and, by implication, for the RPR.⁴¹⁰ News of Léontieff's defeat, on the other hand, was received with disappointment by Le Pensec in Paris, who cast doubts on the future political stability of the territory.⁴¹¹ The Rocard Government would have preferred the re-election of Léontieff to the appointment of Flosse. In this respect things had changed drastically since 1981, when Léontieff had been in the Gaullist camp, an irony noted by Drollet of Ia Mana, who had backed the PS in 1981.⁴¹² Here

**Table 47. French Polynesian Territorial Elections
1991**

Territorial Results: 17 March

Registered voters	109,462
Votes cast	85,775
Turnout	78.36%
Valid votes	84,798

Party	Votes	% of votes cast	Seats
Tahoeraa Union	26,639	31.06	18
Polynésienne ¹	19,737	23.01	14
Ai'a Api	10,414	12.14	5
Tavini	9,693	11.30	4
Others	18,315	21.35	0

Source: *Le Monde* 20 mars 1991.

¹ Coalition led by Juventin and Alexandre Léontieff.

**Table 48. French Legislative Elections, 1993.
French Polynesian Results**

First Round: 21 March

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Valid votes 41,417

Candidate	Votes	% of valid votes
Juventin (RPR)	13,870	33.49
Temaru (Tavini)	11,206	27.06
Léontieff (UDF)	7,786	18.80
Raapoto ¹	2,593	6.26
Dehors ²	2,568	6.20
Others	3,394	8.18

Second constituency (East Polynesia)

Registered voters 46,141

Votes cast 32,010

Turnout 69.37%

Valid votes 31,477

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Flosse (RPR)	15,787	49.32
Vernaudon ³	8,523	26.63
Salmon ⁴	4,654	14.54
Others	2,513	17.85

¹ An independent right candidate.

² Presidential majority candidate.

³ Presidential majority candidate.

⁴ Pro-independence candidate.

Second Round: 28 March

First constituency (West Polynesia)

Registered voters	64,296
Votes cast	44,098
Turnout	68.59%
Valid votes	43,025

Candidate	Votes	% of votes cast
Juventin (RPR)	23,996	54.42
Temaru (Tavini)	19,059	43.22

Source: *Le Monde* 23 mars 1993; Chaussebourg & Ferenczi (eds.): *Les élections législatives de mars 1993* p.147.

Table 49. CEP and Military Spending in French Polynesia 1981-1991

Expenditures (MF CFP)	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
Personnel wages	9,540	10,180	12,730	15,460	15,310	15,340	16,460	17,200	16,400	19,340	21,860
Subcontractors ¹	4,560	5,450	10,560	10,690	11,000	11,450	11,480	13,680	13,210	15,000	12,830
Import tariffs ²	2,700	2,820	4,000	4,230	5,490	6,160	6,910	5,880	6,100	5,800	7,320
Total	16,790	18,450	27,280	29,370	31,800	32,950	34,850	36,760	35,710	40,140	42,010

Sources: Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.38; IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.183.

¹ Money paid to local firms for construction work and sundry other services.

² Duties on imported equipment paid to the Territorial Government.

Ai'a and Ai'a Api, the two 'autonomist' parties (as much as the term meant anything since Flosse's negotiation of the Internal Autonomy Statute) had gone their separate ways after uniting behind Léontieff in December 1987. Here Ai'a, through its alignment with Léontieff, enjoyed the sympathy of the Rocard Government, in marked contrast with the backing of the party for the UDF in 1981. After the territorial elections, Ai'a Api formed a coalition government with Tahoeraa Huiraatira, once more placing pragmatism ahead of any asserted ideological principles.

The Left/Right divide which governs analysis of French parliamentary politics has not had great validity in the French Polynesian context since 1981. Apart from Flosse's ties with the RPR, in Papeete links with metropolitan French parties have tended to be transitory and motivated by short-term pragmatism. Fickle ties shown by territorial leaders were to contribute significantly to the chaotic local political situation that developed following the territorial elections of 1991.

On 21 March 1991, Flosse and Vernaudeau formed a coalition government.⁴¹³ Its installation was to be delayed by discontent in the Opposition. On 30 March 1991 Alexandre Léontieff, Juventin and Oscar Temaru⁴¹⁴ announced a joint boycott by their parties of the Territorial Assembly session to protest against a coalition which they claimed did not deserve to be in power. The fact that Flosse and Vernaudeau possessed a democratically elected majority was considered less important than the disruptive expression of opposition dissent. Lack of a quorum in the Territorial Assembly forced its closure until 4 April, when the Opposition relented somewhat, allowing Flosse to be appointed Territorial President, and Vernaudeau to assume his functions as the Territorial Assembly President.⁴¹⁵

Resistance to Flosse, led by Juventin and Temaru, as well as by local unionists, intensified in June and July of 1991. On 21 June, the motorway from Papeete to Faaa international airport was cut by roadblocks. The barricades were the effort of two groups. Tavini Huiraatira militants responded to a call by Temaru to protest at the introduction of the French lottery and increased taxes on consumer items.⁴¹⁶ The lottery was portrayed as an unwanted vice which would cause poor Polynesians to squander their meagre incomes, while the taxes on consumer items were opposed because they would likewise affect the incomes of the disadvantaged. In addition, members of the local drivers' union (truckers and taxi drivers) mobilised to demonstrate against the introduction of higher petrol taxes by Flosse. These people received the assistance of Juventin. He fomented discontent by setting up a "comité de lutte" to assist the protesters.⁴¹⁷

Flosse's contested taxes, forming an austerity package designed to gain enough revenue to repay around 40% of the 1991 territorial deficit, raised taxation on non-essential foodstuffs, beer, tobacco, fuel and electricity. The roadblocks were dismantled after Flosse conceded the lifting of the petrol tax five days later.⁴¹⁸ This measure did not resolve the dispute. The "comité de lutte" maintained its opposition to the rest of the reforms, calling for Flosse to introduce an income tax for high salary earners, rather than introducing taxes which would hit those on lower incomes as well.⁴¹⁹

After it became apparent that Flosse had no intention of doing this, more forceful rejection of his policies was expressed by the "comité de lutte". On 9 July the two major territorial unions, the USATP and A Tia I Mua⁴²⁰ called for a general strike which was answered by dockers in Papeete, and at the CEP facilities on Moruroa and Hao Atolls.⁴²¹ Further roadblocks were set up on 10 July, across the highway to Faaa, and blocking the road to the wharf at Papeete. Whereas previously High Commissioner Montpezat had not intervened, perhaps believing that Flosse could sort the problem out, this time protest action concerned the CEP and the port of Papeete. This turn in events directly affected defence and external communications, areas of state competence under the Internal Autonomy Statute. Montpezat sent in gendarmes to clear roadblocks set

up with Papeete municipal vehicles by some of Juventin's employees.⁴²² While dispersing approximately 500 to 1,000 people manning the roadblocks, and lifting vehicles out of the way with a crane, 37 gendarmes were injured.⁴²³ On 11 July, Montpezat managed to negotiate a settlement between the Territorial Government and the protesters. Fulfilling his part of the agreement, Flosse lifted the new taxes, while for their part, the protesters called off their actions.⁴²⁴

The incident was assumed to have shaken Flosse's resolve, for on 12 July he announced he was stepping down from the presidency.⁴²⁵ He went into retreat, eventually returning to work on 19 July. By this time, the Cresson Government had calmed tempers by offering state subsidies to cover the part of the territorial deficit which Flosse had hoped to repay with the higher taxes.⁴²⁶ Paris did not wish to see confrontation turn into a repeat of the riot of October 1987. Flosse expressed bitterness over the protest actions, accusing Temaru, Léontieff and Juventin of attempting to destabilise his administration.⁴²⁷ In the light of events he had some cause for doing so.

The incidents of June and July 1991 did not mark the end of trouble experienced by Flosse with unionists. From 2 December 1991 to 7 February 1992, the territorial economy was crippled by a seamen's strike, organised by those working on interisland shipping in French Polynesia. The strike was reportedly the longest in French Polynesian history.⁴²⁸ It culminated in a blockade of the port of Papeete for four days from 3 February, when the striking seamen anchored and chained together about a dozen ships in the harbour, blocking access.⁴²⁹ The seamen called the action off after local shipping companies met most of the demands of the strikers, including higher pay, and a guarantee to cancel legal proceedings against them.⁴³⁰ As in the case of the dockers' strike of 1987, the seamen's strike affected a vulnerable part of the territorial economy, its trade.

From late 1991 to early 1992, the seamen's strike was not the only major confrontation that Flosse faced. His alliance with Vernaudeau, which had been intended to last for five years,⁴³¹ lasted just 159 days.⁴³² In September 1991, Flosse announced he would be increasing the size of the government majority by signing a pact with Here Ai'a. Acting in what he portrayed as the interests of increasing political harmony, Flosse dismissed two Ai'a Api cabinet members, replacing them with appointees from Here Ai'a. This broke the clause in the coalition agreement with Ai'a Api which guaranteed it a fixed number of Ministers. Vernaudeau responded by announcing that his party was joining the Opposition.⁴³³

Vernaudeau declared his intention of keeping his post as President of the Territorial Assembly, which he had held since the territorial elections of 1991. He used his position to paralyse the Flosse Government. Vernaudeau refused to convoke the Territorial Assembly so that the territorial budget for 1992 might be adopted, a situation which lasted until April 1992. Under the Internal Autonomy Statute the High Commissioner was the sole person who could convoke the Territorial Assembly other than its President, although Montpezat refused to become embroiled in the affair, leaving certain commentators to speculate that he was passively assisting the opponents of Flosse.⁴³⁴ The deadlock was broken by Montpezat's replacement as High Commissioner, Michel Jau. On 3 April 1992, after much toing and froing with the Administrative Tribunal over statutory considerations, an assembly majority of 25 Territorial Councillors convened outside the Territorial Assembly building to elect Juventin as the new Territorial Assembly President. Jau upheld the election, which insensed Vernaudeau to the point that on 4 April he and his followers occupied the Territorial Assembly building and barricaded themselves in.⁴³⁵

When the territorial budget was finally about to be adopted in July 1992, Jau exercised his prerogative as High Commissioner under article 77 of the

Internal Autonomy Statute and seized control of the budget.⁴³⁶ He then proceeded to cut around 1,000MF CFP from it, holding that the Flosse Government had overestimated likely territorial revenue in forthcoming months.⁴³⁷ Flosse had refused to reduce projected expenditure, declaring that such a cut would impinge on essential services.

As if this catalogue of woes was not bad enough, the Flosse Government was adversely affected by Prime Minister Bérégovoy's announcement in Paris on 8 April 1992 of a one-year suspension of nuclear testing in French Polynesia.⁴³⁸ The suspension represented Mitterrand's response to the declining chances of a global thermo-nuclear conflict following the end of the Cold War in 1989, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991. The Russians had announced a suspension of their nuclear testing in October 1990, which President Yeltsin had renewed twelve months later.⁴³⁹ France had already reduced its annual number of tests in French Polynesia, partly due to budgetary considerations, and partly due to declining superpower tensions apparent from the late 1980s. During his visit to French Polynesia in August 1989, Rocard had announced that the annual number of nuclear tests conducted would be reduced from eight to six, effective as of 1990.⁴⁴⁰ In spite of this announcement, CEP and related military expenditure in French Polynesia in the early 1990s maintained the steep climb it had experienced in the preceding decade. It rose from 16,790MF CFP in 1981, to 35,710MF CFP in 1989, 40,140MF CFP in 1990, and 42,010MF CFP in 1991. (Table 49)

In August 1989 Rocard denied that the reduction in testing called into question the future of the CEP, and by implication that of French Polynesia. His announcement nevertheless prompted experts in Papeete to take stock of the consequences of a closure of the nuclear programme. ITSTAT estimated in 1989 that in the event of the withdrawal of the CEP, without state compensation territorial GDP would decrease by 23%, and 17% of the paid workforce would become unemployed.⁴⁴¹ Even prior to the announcement of the test suspension in April 1992, territorial leaders had been thinking about the possibility that Paris might eventually phase out the CEP in response to changes in the global strategic balance, and to the necessities of tightening budgetary constraints on defence expenditure. Alexandre Léontieff expressed his hope that as declining testing operations resulted in reduced income for the Territorial Government, the State would feel obliged to compensate French Polynesia.⁴⁴² By November 1991, as a Deputy for French Polynesia, Léontieff was stating publicly that in order to prepare the territory for any withdrawal of the CEP, Paris should negotiate a French Polynesian equivalent of the Matignon Accords, complete with development and administrative arrangements designed to lead the territory to a more self-reliant existence.⁴⁴³ This concept was reiterated by Temaru, Vernaudeau and Boris Léontieff on 9 April 1992, immediately after the announcement of the test suspension. They issued a joint statement to the effect that Paris should allow the "emancipation" of the territory by dissolving the Territorial Government and calling new elections, to be followed by the negotiation of "une plate-forme commune sur les mesures institutionnelles, économiques et financières qui conviennent désormais à la Polynésie".⁴⁴⁴ Alexandre Léontieff responded by declaring himself resolutely opposed to French Polynesian independence, observing that the islands were not self-sufficient enough to be viably independent.⁴⁴⁵

There was little chance anyway that Flosse would allow himself to be turned out of office, and still less that he would push for independence. On 23 April Flosse left Papeete for Paris to attend the first of a series of meetings with the Bérégovoy Government on the matter of compensatory state funding for the Territorial Government.⁴⁴⁶ Some economic effects of the test suspension were noticeable as early as the first few months after its announcement in 1992. By June, the CEP had laid off around 100 civilian employees.⁴⁴⁷ The IEOM noted

in September, that from May to August 1992 territorial revenue had declined 5,300MF CFP compared to revenue received between May and August 1991. The reason for this trend was a drop in imports and, consequently, in customs revenue.⁴⁴⁸ Overall, the IEOM attributed the economic downturn to the testing suspension. In July 1992, it was estimated, not disinterestedly, by Patrick Peaucellier, Flosse's Finance Minister, that the territory that year would be deprived of 2,400MF CFP in revenue it would have received from the military had the suspension not occurred. The Bérégovoy Government did not agree with this figure, offering instead 2,000MF CFP in short-term compensation through a loan to be repaid by December 1992.⁴⁴⁹

On 14 May 1992, a territorial delegation led by Flosse signed a state-territorial protocol in Paris with representatives of the Bérégovoy Government. The protocol established a development plan called the Pact for Progress. The Pact fulfilled Léontieff's concept of a French Polynesian equivalent to the Matignon Accords, but was limited to socio-economic proposals and did not include any reference to a self-determination referendum. Territorial independence was not an issue, in spite of comments advocating self-determination from the Maohi nationalist minority. Le Pensec heralded the agreement as "un véritable pacte de progrès économique, social et culturel".⁴⁵⁰ The Territorial Government undertook to reform local taxation to permit a redistribution of wealth and to promote greater social equality, while the State gave its backing to the funding of the main reforms deemed important by the territory. Under the Pact for Progress, Flosse supervised the organisation of a series of workshops in Papeete in July 1992, during which community leaders identified key areas for reform, including the need to promote local production, the introduction of income tax and the diminution of import tariffs, the reduction of public servants' salaries, greater recognition of local identity in education, promotion of family planning in order to lower the birth rate, and land reform.⁴⁵¹ To what extent these issues will really be addressed remains to be seen. Past territorial inertia on the promotion of wide-ranging socio-economic reform does not invoke optimism. Participants at the workshops also took the opportunity to pillory territorial politicians, blaming them for much of the economic dependence, and administrative instability, of French Polynesia.⁴⁵² Yet it is upon these figures that the future of the territory rests.

In January 1993, Flosse led another territorial delegation to Paris to present French Polynesian proposals to Le Pensec. After some disagreement over the amount of additional state funding French Polynesia should receive over the following ten years,⁴⁵³ Le Pensec committed the State to approximately 115MFF in special territorial funding in 1993. On 28 January, an accord was signed guaranteeing this, as well as committing the State to intensified infrastructural work, social programmes and economic diversification.⁴⁵⁴ After negotiations with the Balludur Government in September 1993, this amount became the first instalment of a projected total of 3,410MFF worth of funding for the territory from 1994 to 1998.⁴⁵⁵ Whether this accord will prove as disappointing as the Eighth Plan and those which followed it has yet to be demonstrated. The State will need to transcend the limitations of its past developmental assistance if it is to bring about fundamental change to the dependent state of the territory. This consideration has become more pressing in the 1990s, with the reduction of the activities of the CEP bringing to the forefront of debate French Polynesia's level of reliance on funding generated by the nuclear presence. An awareness exists in Paris of these issues. Speaking to the National Assembly on 13 January 1994 as Minister to the DOM-TOM, Perben offered official recognition of such economic limitations: "Le développement [en Polynésie française], en grande partie artificiel, s'est fait au détriment des activités économiques traditionnelles et a provoqué de sérieux déséquilibres économiques et sociaux."⁴⁵⁶

In the short term at least, the representatives of the State and of the Territorial Government have come to a settlement over the territory's economic future. The response of Paris to declining territorial revenue has been to replace military financial support with civilian aid. This step is not, in itself, the path to a reduction in territorial dependence on state funds. As Poirine pointed out: "*En effet, simplement remplacer la rente atomique par plus de rente administrative civile revient en fait à remplacer l'héroïne par la méthadone chez un grand drogué.*"⁴⁵⁷ With or without the CEP, French Polynesia faces serious challenges in the later 1990s if it is to develop a higher degree of economic self-reliance. In the absence of exploitable mineral resources as rich as those of New Caledonia it is unlikely that Papeete will ever become as self-sufficient as Nouméa. Local agriculture might be developed to the point where it met a greater part of territorial needs, although its physical limitations are such that its capacity to become a major export earner are slight. The French Polynesian EEZ holds various possibilities for mineral and fisheries revenue, but its exploitation by 1993 was still marginal.

Most importantly of all, it should be asked whether French Polynesian political leaders have the will to lead the territory out of its dependence. For all their pronouncements advocating reduced dependence, they persisted in seeing economic salvation as residing in recourse to metropolitan French subsidies. Their reasoning was based on the assumption that just as Paris had provided for territorial financial needs in the past, it would carry on doing so in the future, whatever the fate of the CEP. Territorial leaders may very well be right. There was no indication in the early 1990s that Paris was becoming parsimonious. The amount of state finance required to stabilise the French Polynesian budget was minute by national standards, and was arguably worth expending to maintain a geostrategic base which had been useful to the Fifth Republic. However this assistance mentality gave the lie both to professed local aspirations to self-government, and to claims by French Governments and state planners that Paris aimed to encourage local autonomy. For all the administrative renovations in the 1980, the territory was more dependent on metropolitan France for its financial wellbeing in the early 1990s than it had been in the 1950s.

The persistence of French Polynesian reliance on the State cast doubts on the economic substance of internal autonomy, just as the disruptive infighting and profligate spending of territorial political leaders called into question internal autonomy's administrative viability. Financial mismanagement and self-interested, counterproductive manoeuvring in Papeete since 1984 have eroded the perceived integrity and competence of territorial political leaders. Shortly before his return to Paris in February 1992, Montpezat expressed these doubts:

Ce que les gens mettent en cause, c'est le fonctionnement de l'autonomie interne. [...] Aux élus de s'interroger, s'occupent-ils vraiment de la population? Il est préoccupant qu'il ne se passe pas une semaine sans que l'on ait besoin de recourir à l'arbitrage du haut-commissaire ou des tribunaux.⁴⁵⁸

Participants at the development workshops of July 1992 showed similar disillusionment with territorial leaders. Flosse commented wryly that they must have employed every abusive epithet they could find in the dictionary.⁴⁵⁹ An opinion poll published on 25 November 1992 by the two daily newspapers in Papeete, *La Dépêche* and *Les Nouvelles*, showed the extent of popular disaffection with local politicians. 70% of those polled indicated their belief that French Polynesian politicians were motivated solely by self-interest; 51% claimed that internal autonomy had failed.⁴⁶⁰

In January 1993, around 3,000 protesters in Papeete called for the resignations of Flosse and Juventin, and for a clean-up of local political life.⁴⁶¹ The protest was a response to corruption in territorial politics, corruption which had spread so blatantly that it had become public knowledge. Allegations of misuse of public office by public figures were nothing new in Papeete, although

since the signature of the Internal Autonomy Statute the degree of corruption appeared to have worsened. Various local politicians had turned to their personal advantage the greater independence of territorial institutions from Paris.

The most prominent subject of allegations of corruption was Flosse. Unsubstantiated stories about his dealings were legion. A brief résumé of two affairs concerning which some substance has been revealed is offered here. The affairs demonstrate that since 1984, on occasion Flosse has used his position as Territorial President in an unprofessional manner.

In 1985 and 1986, what became known as the cement affair took place. In 1985 Flosse became well acquainted with the honorary South Korean consul in Papeete, Bernard Baudry, which led to an invitation for Flosse to visit Korea. During the visit, Baudry gave Flosse 28,000 free teeshirts, made in South Korea, with "Tahoeraa Huiraatira" printed on them. After his return, Flosse gave Baudry exclusive rights over the importation of cement. Braun-Ortega, who was then director of a company importing New Zealand cement, brought legal proceedings against the decree, claiming that Flosse was exercising favouritism out of self-interest. In 1986 the Administrative Tribunal found that Flosse's accordance of exclusive cement importation rights to Baudry was in breach of free market principles and overturned it. Braun-Ortega took the case to Paris and laid charges against Flosse in September 1986; these were later dismissed.⁴⁶²

A longer case implicating Flosse involved the misuse of territorial funds for the development of property belonging to him. In May 1987, *Les Nouvelles de Tahiti* revealed that around 100MF CFP had been paid from public works funds to lay a private road leading to a residence owned by Flosse.⁴⁶³ Litigation over the case dragged on until December 1992 when the Court of Appeal in Paris ruled that his appeal of an earlier guilty verdict had failed.⁴⁶⁴ Flosse was given a six month suspended sentence and he paid a symbolic 1FF fine for the misuse of public funds.⁴⁶⁵

Such misuse of public position was not limited to Flosse. It was considered standard practice among territorial administrators to appoint friends and relatives to positions of responsibility, to dispense public funds in various forms to interest groups around election time, and to reap personal benefit from public office.⁴⁶⁶ The head of the Interisland Aid Development Fund in 1990, Roger Marara, offers a blatant example of the extent to which such practices were exercised in French Polynesia. In 1990 he had employed on his payroll his brother, his cousins, his sister-in-law, his brothers-in-law, his deacon, and his mistress, all of whom received their share of some 4,343MF CFP distributed in monthly salaries. Braun-Ortega discovered that the agency was employing some odd accounting techniques. On Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas, around 28,000MF CFP were distributed to build public housing, for which the construction costs were only 14,400MF CFP. Where the difference went could only be speculated upon.⁴⁶⁷

Conduct by Juventin in his capacity as Mayor of Papeete offered proof of the extent to which corruption had penetrated municipal administration. Mention of his partisan support for protest against the Flosse Government from June to July 1991 has already been made, as has mention of the use of Papeete municipal vehicles to form roadblocks on 10 July 1991. Another irregular practice, revealed in 1990, was the receipt by Juventin of a monthly salary of 400,000F CFP as director of Taraama-Nui (The Big Clean-up), a rubbish collection firm employed by his municipality.⁴⁶⁸ Questions were asked about the legality of Juventin having both a financial interest in this company, and granting it exclusive rights over his municipality's waste collection. In October 1992, Juventin was charged with corruption, concerning which appeal proceedings promise to be as protracted as those surrounding Flosse.⁴⁶⁹ Juventin was not the only local body administrator who attracted the interest of the law. In August 1992 Hiti Tetoe, the municipal chief of police in Papeete, and Pierre Chanut, a

former adviser to Juventin, were charged with abuse of public office and "active corruption".⁴⁷⁰

For all this, French Polynesian voters have continued to offer their backing to established formations in territorial politics. French Polynesian abstention rates in territorial and in national elections have shown no generalised increase since 1981. Flosse's career has not been greatly affected by his protracted court cases, and nor has Juventin's. In the legislative elections of March 1993, Flosse won back his seat as Deputy for East Polynesia, while Juventin was elected RPR Deputy for West Polynesia. (Table 48) Some discontent could however be read into the unprecedented level of support which Temaru received in the elections. He gained 44.32% of the vote in the second round in West Polynesia,⁴⁷¹ far ahead of past levels of support for Tavini Huiraatira candidates, which usually fell between 10% to 15% of the vote. Temaru attracted a greater percentage of the vote in his electorate than either of the FLNKS candidates managed in New Caledonia during the legislative elections. Roch Wamytan obtained 13.82% of votes cast in the first New Caledonian constituency, while Léopold Jorédié gained 28.90% in the second constituency. (Table 22) It was speculated by Temaru and his sympathisers that the unusually high level of support gained by the Tavini Huiraatira candidate in West Polynesia was a sign of disaffection among French Polynesian voters looking for a radical change.⁴⁷²

It has yet to be seen that the political class in Papeete has deserved the greater powers accorded by Paris from 1984. The behaviour of politicians in Papeete has had a tendency to be immature, self-interested and inherently unstable. Territorial Governments since 1984 have shown neither great administrative flair, nor imagination, in addressing the developmental problems facing them, preferring to recycle old ideas offered by state plans that have had limited success. Policy packages proposed by Flosse for economic recovery proved as incapable of improving the efficiency of the territorial economy as Léontieff's, although admittedly the former was faced with trying circumstances from 1991. In 1992 and 1993 Flosse was in the unenviable position of trying to develop an economy troubled by strikes, political infighting and factionalism, not to mention the imposing question of the suspension of the CEP.

On the basis of French Polynesian political behaviour, it could plausibly be asked whether a return to the arbitrary, impersonal state dirigisme of the 1960s might not be preferable to the greater territorial self-administration exercised since 1984. The State could exercise greater control over the profligate spending of the territorial bureaucracy if not for the barrier to intervention posed by the Internal Autonomy Statute. But such a recentralisation would not resolve socio-economic and structural questions. Politically motivated mismanagement is not solely a French Polynesian failing: it has not been absent from metropolitan French political conduct. Many of the troubles facing French Polynesia in the 1990s were the creation of the State, either directly or indirectly. The implantation of the CEP was organised in Paris long before 1981 with little regard for the socio-economic consequences in the territory. Territorial leaders may have been inadequate administrators, but they have acted under conditions of autonomy granted to them by the French State. Intellectual renovations will be needed in Paris as well as in Papeete to stabilise the administration of the territory.

A decade after the foundation of internal autonomy, French Polynesia was still in search of the financial means to its realisation, and of the original policy which might transform it from an institutional condition into political reality.

Notes

¹ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1702.

² In a metropolitan French survey by Indice conducted in 1982 and involving 1,000 people, only a minority were capable of giving the approximate location of New Caledonia and French Polynesia. In response to the question "Selon vous, la Nouvelle-Calédonie se trouve..." 38% of those polled indicated it was to be found in the Pacific Ocean, 5% thought it was in the Atlantic Ocean, 20% thought it was in the Indian Ocean, and 37% did not know. Concerning French Polynesia, 38% of respondents said it was in the Pacific, 3% thought it was in the Atlantic, 23% claimed it was in the Indian Ocean, and 36% did not know. Cited in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 8 mars 1982.

³ Even when presenting analyses of political corruption and social unrest in Tahiti, the serious metropolitan French press displayed a predilection for accompanying such articles with photographs of alluring, dusky maidens, palm trees and tropical sunsets. See for example *Le Figaro* 21 mai 1986, 27 décembre 1988; *Libération* 18 mai 1990; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 13 juillet 1990, 18 juillet 1990, 10 janvier 1992; and *Le Point* 23 novembre 1987, 24-30 décembre 1992. *Le Monde* was an exception, partly because its format relied less on photographic illustration, and partly because its editors were more perceptive.

⁴ Flosse has been a pivotal figure in French Polynesian politics since the 1970s. Born in 1932 on Rikitea in the Gambier Islands (Map 7), Flosse is a demi whose father was Alsatian. After working as a teacher in Papeete in the 1950s, Flosse went into business, starting as a hotel manager. In 1958, he joined the anti-independence UTD-UNR coalition and campaigned for French Polynesian adherence to the Fifth Republic. In 1965 he was elected Mayor of Pirae, on Tahiti. In 1967 he was elected Territorial Councillor. In 1971, he became President of the UTD-UNR. In 1977 he founded the party descended from the earlier UTD-UNR: the Gaullist Tahoeraa Huiraatira (Citizens' Unity) party. In 1978 Flosse was elected RPR Deputy for East Polynesia. Claude Garcia: *Les conséquences économiques, politiques et sociales de l'implantation du C.E.P. en Polynésie française* pp.70-71.

⁵ See Introduction note 11 and the bibliography.

⁶ "[...]il est exact de dire qu'il existe en Polynésie française un problème social généré par des causes structurelles [...]" *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 1er février 1988 p.463.

⁷ Bernard Poirine: *Tahiti. Du melting pot à l'explosion?* p.29.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 8 mai 1987.

¹⁰ See for example François Mitterrand: *Visite officielle de M. le Président de la République et de Mme. Mitterrand en Polynésie française* 15-18 mai 1990.

¹¹ Pierre-Yves Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* pp.103-104.

¹² The CEP began setting up facilities in French Polynesia from 1963 because the Algerian declaration of independence necessitated the eventual closure of French testing facilities in the Sahara. French nuclear testing nevertheless continued in Algeria until February 1966. Andrew Burrows *et al.*: *French Nuclear Testing 1960-1988* p.26.

¹³ V. Thompson & R. Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands. French Polynesia and New Caledonia* pp.32-33.

¹⁴ Ibid. pp.41-42; Michel Lextre: "Il y a trente ans: la loi-cadre Defferre, (1956) ou: comment la Polynésie a échoué dans sa première expérience d'autonomie interne" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.237 tome 20 no.2 décembre 1986 pp.24-40.

¹⁵ Results cited in Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* pp.55, 125, 179.

¹⁶ Michel Lextre: "De la chute de Pouvanea au retour en arrière des institutions" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.245 tome 20 no.10 décembre 1988 pp.5-7.

¹⁷ Thompson & Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands* pp.314-317; Maurice Lenormand: "Décolonisation ratée - Indépendance avortée" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* nos.92/93 année 1991 - 1 & 2 p.143.

¹⁸ Jean Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taiti à la Polynésie française* p.24. Phosphate from Makatea accounted for around 30% of French Polynesian export sales. Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.46.

¹⁹ Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.179.

²⁰ Ibid. pp.181-182; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.135.

²¹ *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.232 tome 19 no.9 septembre 1988 p.46.

²² Ibid. pp.49-51.

- 23 P.-Y. Toullelan & B. Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.116.
- 24 B. Danielsson & M.-T. Danielsson: *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale* pp.125-128.
- 25 Gilles Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia 1960 to 1990* p.8.
- 26 Total military spending in French Polynesia in 1961 was 194MF CFP. In 1966 it was 12,356MF CFP. Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.66.
- 27 8,710MF CFP in 1971; 18,593MF CFP in 1980. Ibid.
- 28 Ibid. p.46; Thompson & Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands* p.133.
- 29 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.46; *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.13.
- 30 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Thompson & Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands* p.134.
- 33 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Gabriel Tetiarihi: "Papeete: un exemple de croissance urbaine accélérée" in *Cahiers d'outre-mer* octobre-décembre 1983 p.353.
- 36 Ibid. p.343.
- 37 Ibid. p.357.
- 38 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.44.
- 39 Of the 137,382 inhabitants recorded in the 1977 census, 90,160 were full Polynesians, 15,338 were full Europeans, and 7,356 were full Asians. ITSTAT: *Tableaux Economiques de la Polynésie française 1991 (TEP 91)* p.28.
- 40 Concerning Polynesian educational disadvantages, see Poirine: "L'échec scolaire des Polynésiens".
- 41 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.145.
- 42 Poirine: *Tahiti. Du melting pot à l'explosion?* p.21.
- 43 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.122.
- 44 The minimum wage earner received 42,325F CFP per month. A civil servant with higher education earned 427,000F CFP per month. Barry Shineberg: "The Image of France: recent developments in French Polynesia" in *The Journal of Pacific History* vol.21 no.3 July 1986 p.159.
- 45 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.85. For a detailed account of the situation of Papeete's slum dwellers, see M. Cizeron & M. Hienly (eds.): *Tahiti: the other side*.
- 46 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.30.
- 47 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.87.
- 48 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.127.
- 49 Thompson & Adloff: *The French Pacific Islands* p.140.
- 50 Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* pp.128-129.
- 51 In 1991, a UN study rated French Polynesia as the seventh most expensive tourist destination in the world. Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* p.69.
- 52 Ibid. p.129.
- 53 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.84; *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.20.
- 54 Roy Willis: "Moruroa: the economic effects of atomic testing in French Polynesia" in R. Aldrich (ed.): *France, Oceania and Australia: past and present* p.119.
- 55 Ibid. p.119.
- 56 Ibid. pp.119-120.
- 57 *Le Monde* 22-23 juillet 1979.
- 58 See Danielsson & Danielsson: *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale* pp.23-30.
- 59 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.128.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid. p.138.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 For detailed consideration of the electoral politics of this period see William Tagupa: *Politics in French Polynesia 1945-1975*.
- 64 Danielsson & Danielsson: *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale* pp.115-116; Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.194.

⁶⁵ Teariki was born in 1914 of Polynesian parents. He became a Territorial Councillor for Moorea in 1953 and was Territorial President from 1969 to 1971. He was Deputy for French Polynesia from 1961 to 1967. From the 1960s, he advocated the goal of internal autonomy for French Polynesia and opposed nuclear testing. He died in a tractor accident in October 1983. Garcia: *Les conséquences économiques, politiques et sociales de l'implantation du C.E.P. en Polynésie française* pp.71-72; Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.150.

Sanford was born in 1912. and is the great grandson of an American. He has a fluent command of English, which he grew up speaking in his demi family. He was Mayor of Faaa from 1965 to 1977. He became a Territorial Councillor in 1967, and replaced Teariki as Deputy that year. He remained Deputy until 1978. Sanford opposed independence in the 1960s and 1970s, and accepted the CEP for the jobs and income it offered to French Polynesia, but believed the territory should have greater internal government. Garcia: *Les conséquences économiques, politiques et sociales de l'implantation du C.E.P. en Polynésie française* pp.68-69; Bengt Danielsson: "French Polynesia" in A. Ali & R. Crocombe (eds.): *Politics in Polynesia* p.208.

⁶⁶ "Loi no.77-772 du 12 juillet 1977 relative à l'organisation de la Polynésie française" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 13 juillet 1977 pp.3703-3710.

⁶⁷ See the comments by de Branche for the UDF in *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1656. Cf. Giscard d'Estaing's positive balance-sheet of reforms in the territory under his presidency in his speech to the Territorial Assembly during his visit to Papeete in July 1979: "Allocution de M. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Président de la République française devant l'Assemblée Territoriale de la Polynésie française, Papeete, jeudi 19 juillet 1979". (Photocopied press release.)

⁶⁸ As in New Caledonia and in Wallis and Futuna, women have been notable for their absence from the upper ranks of local political parties. Neither Kanak and Maohi politicians, nor their conservative rivals in the Pacific TOM, have shown great enthusiasm for the egalitarian promotion of women to the upper echelons of party ranks.

⁶⁹ Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.183.

⁷⁰ See William Tagupa: "Electoral Behaviour in French Polynesia, 1977-1982" in *Political Science* vol.35 no.1 July 1983 pp.42-43.

⁷¹ François Ravault: "Polynésie, la bombe et l'indépendance" in *Hérodote revue de géographie et de géopolitique* nos.37/38 2e/3e trimestres 1985 p.179.

⁷² Shineberg: "The Image of France" p.163.

⁷³ Toullelan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.125; *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* 5 June 1981 p.30900.

⁷⁴ See chapter 1. Chirac approved of Flosse's bill in 1980. See Chirac's later comments cited in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 27 septembre 1985.

⁷⁵ Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* pp.201-202.

⁷⁶ Tagupa: *Politics in French Polynesia 1945-1975* p.47.

⁷⁷ These rival formations included "Le comité de Soutien à la Candidature de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing", "Le Comité Territorial de Soutien à la Candidature de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing", "Le Comité de Soutien Territorial à la candidature de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing" and the succinct "Comité de Soutien à V.G.E.". *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 6 avril 1981, 30 avril 1981. Flosse referred to them as "le monstre à quatre têtes". Ibid 10 avril 1981.

⁷⁸ Concerning the elections Sanford predicted: "Il n'y aura pas de Chirac. Il y aura Giscard/Mitterrand et c'est Giscard qui l'emportera". Ibid. 10 avril 1981.

⁷⁹ Sanford commented "[...] malgré quelques sombres pronostics et nombreuses embuches tendues de çà et là, nos relations [avec Giscard d'Estaing] sont demeurées positives, saines et empreintes d'amitié.[...] Voilà pourquoi je les [les acolytes de Sanford] ai appelés à voter mais surtout à faire voter pour Valéry Giscard d'Estaing". Ibid. 6 avril 1981.

⁸⁰ Ibid. 11 avril 1981.

⁸¹ "Message personnel de V.G.E. aux Polynésiens" in ibid. 7 avril 1981.

⁸² Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* p.202.

⁸³ "Entre une France libérale et une France marxiste, la Polynésie a choisi..." in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 5 mai 1981.

⁸⁴ Danielsson: "French Polynesia" pp.214-215.

⁸⁵ Ia Mana stated that the presidential election represented "l'occasion, enfin, de changer de politique et en particulier le type de relations entre le gouvernement et le Territoire". *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 5 mai 1981.

⁸⁶ Sanford, Teariki and Flosse have all called for a referendum on the issue of the continuation of nuclear testing and have commented on the CEP's negative implications for the territory. Concerning Sanford and Teariki's history of opposition to nuclear testing from the 1960s to the 1970s see Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* chs.18-49 *passim*. In December 1981, Flosse tabled a resolution in the Territorial Assembly calling for an immediate halt to testing and an inquiry into its safety: *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1982 p.49. Faced with intransigent opposition from Paris, the trio largely portrayed testing as an ugly and regrettable reality which was not going to go away.

⁸⁷ "Si vous pensez que les expérimentations nucléaires sont un héritage à laisser à nos enfants; [...] Alors n'hésitez pas, votez le 10 mai pour Giscard, c'est votre politique, vous ne serez pas déçus." "Ia Mana Te Nunaa s'adresse aux électeurs" in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 30 avril 1981.

⁸⁸ This position was known in French Polynesia. Asked by a local journalist about the Socialist stance on nuclear defence, Mitterrand replied: "Quant à l'armement nucléaire, le parti socialiste, comme vous le savez, en prévoit le maintien." *Ibid* 23 avril 1981.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 25 avril 1981.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* 5 mai 1981.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid* 23 avril 1981.

⁹³ *Ibid.* 8 mai 1981.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 23 avril 1981.

⁹⁵ Tagupa: "Electoral Behaviour in French Polynesia, 1977-1982" p.44.

⁹⁶ *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 8 mai 1981.

⁹⁷ *Le Monde* 19-20 juin 1983.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*; *Far Eastern Economic Review* 11 September 1981 p.35.

⁹⁹ *Le Monde* 26 mai 1982 p.11; *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.29 September 1983 p.32384.

¹⁰⁰ *Le Monde* 1 septembre 1982.

¹⁰¹ See *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 2 avril 1981, 3 avril 1981, 4 avril 1981, 6 avril 1981.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* 10 avril 1981.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 25 avril 1981.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid* 25 avril 1981, 18 avril 1981.

¹⁰⁶ "[...] j'estime que le maintien de notre défense nucléaire est la condition nécessaire au maintien même de notre indépendance dans le monde difficile que nous connaissons. [...] Le Centre d'Expérimentation du Pacifique continuera donc ses activités aussi longtemps que notre pays aura la volonté de maintenir une force de défense indépendante. J'ai pour ma part cette volonté." *Ibid.* 25 avril 1981.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 6 avril 1981.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 18 avril 1981.

¹⁰⁹ "François Mitterrand, pour gouverner, devra s'appuyer sur une majorité à l'Assemblée Nationale qui [...] ne pourrait être constituée qu'avec l'appui des communistes. [...] Seul le RPR, rassemblé derrière Jacques Chirac, pourra constituer la véritable force politique capable de contrecarrer la coalition socialo-communiste." "Déclaration du Tahoeraa Huiraatira" in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 11 mai 1981.

¹¹⁰ Born in 1950, Alexandre Léontieff is the grandson of a Tsarist General who settled in the islands following the Russian revolution of 1917. He received university training in metropolitan France which culminated in a doctorate in economics. After his return to French Polynesia, he became one of the rising stars of Tahoeraa Huiraatira due to his economic knowledge. In June 1982 he held the economy, finance, tourism and sea portfolios for Flosse's Territorial Government. Alexandre Léontieff has a brother, Boris, who is his junior by five years. He too entered Flosse's administration, taking up the works, planning and energy portfolios. *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1982 p.24. Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taïti à la Polynésie française* part 2 p.6.

¹¹¹ Juventin is a political chameleon of autonomist lineage. He became Mayor of Papeete and took over the leadership of Here Ai'a after Teariki's death in 1983.

¹¹² *Le Monde* 22 août 1981.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* 27 mai 1981.

¹¹⁴ *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1982 p.49.

¹¹⁵ Under de Gaulle, atmospheric testing was conducted in French Polynesia regardless of protests from other Pacific islands that nuclear fallout from them could contaminate the environment. In the early 1970s, Pompidou resisted similar lobbying.

¹¹⁶ "Le gouvernement n'est pas opposé à une évolution du statut.[...] Mais ce statut ne doit pas obérer les autres problèmes, ceux qui à mon sens sont les vrais: les problèmes économiques et sociaux. Ce qui conditionnera l'avenir des relations entre le territoire et la métropole, ce sera effectivement la solution de ces problèmes-là." *Le Monde* 22 août 1981.

¹¹⁷ "Communiqué du Conseil des Ministres 26 août 1981" in *BIPA* green file 001 211 816042500.

¹¹⁸ *Le Monde* 23-24 mai 1982.

¹¹⁹ The Mouvement Social-Démocrate was led by Frantz Vanizette, a metropolitan Frenchman who had campaigned for Giscard d'Estaing in the presidential elections of 1974 and 1981. He entered territorial politics in 1957 when he was elected as an independent Territorial Councillor. He was the last métro to hold a seat in the French Polynesian Territorial Assembly in May 1982, which he lost in the elections. Garcia: *Les conséquences économiques, politiques et sociales de l'implantation du C.E.P. en Polynésie française* p.72; *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1982 p.24.

¹²⁰ *Le Monde* 23-24 mai 1982.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* 23-24 mai 1982, 26 mai 1982.

¹²² *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol. 29 September 1983 p.32384.

¹²³ *Le Monde* 26 mai 1982.

¹²⁴ *Pacific Islands Monthly* April 1991 p.18.

¹²⁵ The protocol between Tahoeraa Huiraatira and Here Ai'a published on 23 September 1982 announced that the coalition agreed on the route for French Polynesia's evolution and would attempt to "guarantee the political stability necessary for resolving seriously and effectively the institutional, economic, social and cultural problems of the territory." Cited in *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol. 29 September 1983 p.32385.

¹²⁶ Salmon's closest rival for the post was Vernaudon. Salmon gained 8,350 votes; Vernaudon received 3,993. *Le Monde* 1 septembre 1982.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* 2 juillet 1983.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 14 avril 1983.

¹²⁹ "Communiqué du Conseil des Ministres 31 août 1983" in *BIPA* green file 002 176 836027500.

¹³⁰ "Communiqué du Conseil des Ministres 7 décembre 1983" in *ibid.* 002 249 836042300.

¹³¹ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 10 mai 1984 p.2153.

¹³² *Pacific Islands Monthly* June 1984 p.33.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Le Monde* 17 juillet 1984.

¹³⁵ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 mai 1984 p.2233.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.* 1er août 1984 p.4250.

¹³⁷ See *ibid.* pp.4225-4250.

¹³⁸ The State accorded the territory jurisdiction over labour law, finance and accounting regulations, firearms control, the first cycle of secondary teaching, renounced the creation of a territorial fire and emergency service, and revised some regulations about hydrocarbon oil. *Ibid.* 10 mai 1984 p.2153.

¹³⁹ *Le Monde* 12 mai 1984.

¹⁴⁰ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 1er août 1984 p.4248.

¹⁴¹ *Le Monde* 12 mai 1984.

¹⁴² *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 10 mai 1984 p.2157.

¹⁴³ *Trente jours* juin 1984 p.6.

¹⁴⁴ *Le Monde* 12 mai 1984.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 1er août 1984 pp.43248-4249.

¹⁴⁶ *Le Monde* 16-17 septembre 1984.

¹⁴⁷ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 10 mai 1984 p. 2160, 11 mai 1984 p.2232.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 10 mai 1984 p.2155.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

- 150 Ibid. p.2156.
- 151 Ibid. 11 mai 1984 p.2232.
- 152 See chapter 2.
- 153 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 10 mai 1984 p.2153.
- 154 "Le mode de scrutin communal en Nouvelle-Calédonie et en Polynésie française. Communiqué du Conseil des ministres 27 octobre 1982" in *BIPA* green file 001 523 826035400.
- 155 *L'année politique, économique et sociale en France* 1982 p.158.
- 156 Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taiti à la Polynésie française* p.30.
- 157 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 10 mai 1984 p.2166.
- 158 "Loi no.84-820 du 6 septembre 1984 portant statut du territoire de la Polynésie française" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 pp.2831-2840.
- 159 Ibid.
- 160 The 1977 statute read: "L'Etat conserve ses droits de souveraineté et de propriété sur son domaine public et privé, terrestre, maritime et aérien, l'exploitation des richesses naturelles maritimes restant de la compétence du territoire, sous réserve des engagements internationaux et des dispositions législatives qui en découleront." "Loi no.77-772 du 12 juillet 1977" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 13 juillet 1977 p.3709.
Article 3 of the Internal Autonomy Statute read: "L'Etat exerce ses droits de souveraineté et de propriété sur son domaine public et privé, terrestre, maritime et aérien.[...] l'Etat peut concéder au territoire la compétence en matière d'exploration et d'exploitation des ressources naturelles, biologiques ou non biologiques, du fond de la mer, de son sous-sol et des eaux sur-jacentes." Ibid. 7 septembre 1984 p.2831.
- 161 For example Alexandre Léontieff negotiated the renewal of the Franco-Japanese fishing accord for French Polynesian waters in February 1985. *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 28 février 1985.
- 162 Article 65 in *JO. Lois et décrets* 13 juillet 1977 p.3709.
- 163 Ibid. p.3705.
- 164 The Territorial President in the 1984 statute should not be confused with the President of the Territorial Assembly, who under article 52 was elected for one year to preside over its sessions.
- 165 Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taiti à la Polynésie française* pp.32-33.
- 166 *JO. Lois et décrets* 13 juillet 1977 p.3709.
- 167 Ibid. 7 septembre 1984 p.2838.
- 168 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* pp.144-146.
- 169 Ibid. p.144.
- 170 J. Chesneaux & N. Maclellan: *La France dans le Pacifique. De Bougainville à Moruroa* p.135.
- 171 *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1982 p.24.
- 172 One manifestation of this influence in the political sphere was the fact that nearly all of the French Polynesian political parties, including the most conservative ones, had Tahitian names. Compare this state of affairs to New Caledonia, where even the most radical Kanak nationalist parties have French names.
- 173 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.163.
- 174 *Le Monde* 20 septembre 1984.
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 1er juillet 1985.
- 177 Ibid.
- 178 Ibid.
- 179 Ibid.
- 180 Ibid. 12 décembre 1985.
- 181 Ibid. 14 février 1985.
- 182 The French Polynesian Territorial Assembly had passed the Treaty on 24 January 1985; *ibid.* 25 janvier 1985. The New Caledonian Territorial Assembly had approved it on 6 February: *Le Monde* 1er février 1985, 8 février 1985.
- 183 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 février 1985.
- 184 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 13 février 1985.

- 185 *Pacific Islands Monthly* April 1985 p.29. In 1983, there were 5,570 Tahitians living in New Caledonia. INSEE: *Territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et Dépendances. Résultats du recensement de la population 15 avril 1983* p.62.
- 186 DTSEE: *Schéma de l'économie néo-calédonienne 1985. Volume 4. Synopsis communal* p.64.
- 187 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 16 mars 1985.
- 188 *Le Matin* 14 février 1984; *Le Figaro* 14 février 1984.
- 189 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 13 février 1985.
- 190 Ibid. 10 avril 1985; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 10 avril 1985.
- 191 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 3 juillet 1985.
- 192 Ibid. 6 août 1985.
- 193 *New Zealand Times* 11 August 1985. The same meeting denied observer status to the FLNKS, as its provisional government of Kanaky was not deemed close enough to independence to warrant representation in the Forum. See chapter 7.
- 194 Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.146.
- 195 Ibid. p.151.
- 196 Commissariat Général du Plan: *Outre-mer: le défi des singularités. Préparation du onzième plan* p.57.
- 197 Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.150.
- 198 For details, see Liste d'Union de l'Opposition pour l'Europe: *L'Europe, une chance de plus pour la Polynésie avec Gaston Flosse* pp.12-14.
- 199 Ukeiwé was elected to represent France as a member of the European Parliament in June 1989.
- 200 For example, article 68 of the Internal Autonomy Statute stated: "L'assemblée territoriale est consultée sur les projets de loi portant ratification de conventions internationales traitant de matières ressortissant à la compétence territoriale. [...] Dans tous les cas où son avis doit être recueilli, l'assemblée territoriale dispose d'un délai de trois mois pour se prononcer. Ce délai est réduit à un mois dans le cas prévu au deuxième alinéa de l'article 72 de la présente loi." (Article 72 declared that the High Commissioner could hurry a vote by the Territorial Assembly on urgent legislation.)
- 201 Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.161.
- 202 *Le Monde* 27 juin 1989; *Pacific News Bulletin* August 1989 p.8.
- 203 Of 111,938 registered voters, 12,039 voted. Of these votes, 10,774 were valid. The UDF-RPR list polled highest, with 36.69% of votes cast. *Le Monde* 27 juin 1989.
- 204 There were 71,408 registered voters in June 1979, of whom 40,471 voted. Tagupa: "Electoral Behaviour in French Polynesia 1977-1982" p.46.
- 205 Of 92,072 registered voters in June 1984, 53,841 cast votes. *Le Monde* 21 juin 1984.
- 206 *Tok Blong SPPF* October 1989 p.19.
- 207 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 17 juin 1989 p.2240.
- 208 *Traité sur l'Union Européenne* p.6.
- 209 Ibid. pp.5-6, 20. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 28 août 1992.
- 210 *Traité sur l'Union Européenne* p.5.
- 211 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 28 août 1992.
- 212 See his comments in August 1989 in Alexandre Léontieff: *Allocution prononcée à l'occasion de la visite de M. le Premier ministre Michel Rocard* p.11.
- 213 Of those who voted in the territory on 20 September 1992, 70.41% were for the Treaty, and 29.59% were against. *Le Monde* 22 septembre 1992.
- 214 See the account of their televised RFO debate in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 27 août 1992.
- 215 "Déclaration relative à la représentation des intérêts des pays et territoires d'outre-mer" in *Traité sur l'Union Européenne* p.59.
- 216 *Le Figaro* 5 mai 1986.
- 217 *Libération* 3 décembre 1987.
- 218 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 2 décembre 1987.
- 219 Ibid. 13 février 1987; *Le Monde* 14 février 1987. At the time of his appointment, Teuira was 53 years old. He had been Education Minister in the Flosse Government since April 1986. He was also a deacon in the Evangelical Church. Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taiti à la Polynésie française* part 2 p.8; *Le Point* 11 mai 1987.

- 220 *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* 9 décembre 1987. The motion of censure is reproduced in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 2 décembre 1987.
- 221 Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques: de Taiti à la Polynésie française* part 2 p.10.
- 222 See "Déclaration au nom de la nouvelle majorité territoriale" in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 2 décembre 1987; "Le discours-programme d'Alexandre Léontieff" in *ibid.* 10 décembre 1987.
- 223 *Le Monde* 14 juin 1988.
- 224 *Le Figaro* 25 juin 1988.
- 225 *Libération* 3 décembre 1987.
- 226 *Le Figaro* 25 juin 1987; *Tok Blong SPPF* July 1988 p.18.
- 227 *Le Monde* 30 mars 1993.
- 228 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 24 juillet 1989, 25 juillet 1989.
- 229 Rocard: *Développement, solidarité, coopération régionale* p.56.
- 230 "Loi no.90-612 du 12 juillet 1990" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 14 juillet 1990 p.8319.
- 231 *Le Monde* 19 avril 1990.
- 232 The UDC was an offshoot of the UDF which was created by centrist UDF members in June 1988. *L'année politique, économique et sociale en France 1988* p.69.
- 233 *Le Monde* 15 juin 1990; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 13 juillet 1990.
- 234 Under article 3, 5° the State was responsible for: "Relations financières avec l'étranger et commerce extérieur, sauf les restrictions quantitatives à l'importation, le programme annuel d'importation et les autorisations préalables aux projets d'investissements directs étrangers." "Loi no.90-612 du 12 juillet 1990" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 14 juillet 1990 p.8319.
- 235 "L'Etat exerce ses droits de souveraineté et de propriété sur son domaine public et privé, terrestre, maritime ou aérien. Sous réserve des engagements internationaux et des dispositions prises pour leur application, l'Etat concède au territoire, dans les conditions prévues par un cahier des charges approuvé par décret en Conseil d'Etat, pris après avis de l'assemblée territoriale, l'exercice de compétences en matière d'exploration et d'exploitation des ressources naturelles, biologiques ou non biologiques, du fond de la mer, de son sous-sol et des eaux surjacentes." *Ibid.*
- 236 Toullélan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.150.
- 237 See *Pacific Islands Monthly* April 1988 p.22; *Le Monde* 3 août 1989.
- 238 Karin Von Storkirch: "Suspension of Nuclear Testing: the implication for French Polynesia." Paper presented at the Pacific History Association Conference, University of Canterbury, 4 December 1992 p.8 (photocopy).
- 239 *La Tribune Polynésienne* 2 septembre 1993.
- 240 Poirine: *Tahiti. Du melting pot à l'explosion?* pp.174-175.
- 241 See Gabriel Tetiarihi: "The Society Islands: Squeezing out the Polynesians" in N. Pollock & R. Crocombe: *French Polynesia* pp.110-111.
- 242 See Flosse's comments in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 16 avril 1986.
- 243 François Ravault: "Land Problems in French Polynesia" in *Pacific Perspective* vol.10 no.2 pp.31-65.
- 244 For example the monarchist Pomare Party has actively contested territorial authority over land and maritime resources on Tahiti and Mopelia Atoll, and has opposed territorial exploitation of phosphate on Mataiva Atoll. See *Le Monde* 13 août 1987; *Pacific Islands Monthly* November 1992 p.15, December 1992 pp.16-19.
- 245 Ulrich Delius: *SOS Moruroa. Les essais nucléaires français dans le Pacifique* p.13.
- 246 Duhamel and Mény: *Dictionnaire constitutionnel* p.605.
- 247 "La dernière phrase de l'article 74 de la Constitution est remplacée par deux alinéas ainsi rédigés:
 «Les statuts des territoires d'outre-mer sont fixés par des lois organiques qui définissent, notamment, les compétences de leurs institutions propres, et modifiés, dans la même forme, après consultation de l'assemblée territoriale intéressée.
 «Les autres modalités de leur organisation particulière sont définies et modifiées par la loi après consultation de l'assemblée territoriale intéressée.»" Article 3, "Loi constitutionnelle no.92-554 du 25 juin 1992 ajoutant à la Constitution un titre: «Des Communautés européennes et de l'Union européenne»" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 26 juin 1992 p.8406.
- 248 See Vernaudeau's complaints to PS representatives in the National Assembly that New Caledonia was in better economic health than French Polynesia. *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 novembre 1989 p.4790.

- 249 A. Matinita: "Dix ans de "Miterrandisme" en Polynésie française" in *Tahiti Pacifique* juin 1991 p.19.
- 250 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.38.
- 251 55,700MF CFP of 101,100MF CFP. Ibid. p.39.
- 252 Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* p.117.
- 253 Ibid.
- 254 Total imports were worth 13,131MF CFP, of which 6,334MF CFP worth were metropolitan French. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.96.
- 255 See *Le Monde* 16-17 septembre 1984.
- 256 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* pp.20-21.
- 257 Ibid. p.23.
- 258 "Ce fonds est doté actuellement de 9MF par an qui servent à aider les préparateurs de coprah, à faciliter le développement de petites activités économiques (principalement le tourisme), à aider au retour et à la réinstallation des familles dans les archipels." Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.62.
- 259 *Le Monde* 22 août 1981.
- 260 Bernard Lalanne: "Le prix des DOM-TOM" in *L'Expansion* 8-21 mars 1985 p.80.
- 261 Ibid.
- 262 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.21.
- 263 Ibid. p.22.
- 264 Ibid. p.35.
- 265 François Mitterrand: *Visite officielle de M. le Président de la République et de Mme. Mitterrand en Polynésie française* p.10.
- 266 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.31.
- 267 In his summary of government work on the French Polynesian portfolio in 1983, Maurice Porchon, the government reporter for the Finance Commission, declared: "En ce qui concerne les relations entre l'Etat et le territoire de la Polynésie française, l'année 1983 a été marquée essentiellement par la poursuite des négociations statutaires[...]" *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 18 novembre 1983 p.5388.
- 268 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* pp.21, 23. In 1983, five cyclones hit the territory, destroying crops, causing 16,000MF CFP in damage, killing 17 people, and injuring 200. *Presence* nos.14-15 4/1989-1/1990 p.15.
- 269 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 22 octobre 1987.
- 270 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* p.55.
- 271 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 27 septembre 1985.
- 272 The number of unemployed increased from 7,332 to 11,430. IEOM: *Exercice 1988. Rapport d'activité. Polynésie française* p.16.
- 273 In 1988, 50% of French Polynesians of working age under 20 were unemployed (3,960 out of 7,870), as were 19% of those aged from 20-29 (5,150 out of 26,510). These statistics did not include inhabitants working unpaid in subsistence agriculture. Ibid. p.17.
- 274 "Cette réussite, c'est d'abord et surtout celle d'une équipe de responsables politiques et administratifs qui s'est constituée autour de Gaston Flosse [...]" RPR: *Une politique pour les DOM et les TOM* cited in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 14 décembre 1985.
- 275 Ibid.
- 276 French Polynesian commercial agriculture had declined by 1992 to the point that it could not survive without subsidies and import barriers. Copra producers were paid 65F CFP per kg produced. The export value was 7F CFP per kg. Beef production was supported by a tariff on imported beef which was in theory equivalent to a subsidy of 135F CFP per kg of locally produced meat. Pork production was protected by the restriction of pork imports to licensed delicatessens, which were charged 52% import duty. Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* pp.131-132, 281.
- 277 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 22 octobre 1987.
- 278 "Communiqué des services du Premier ministre, à propos du Comité interministériel consacré à la Polynésie française, Paris le 1er décembre 1987" in *BIPA* green file 002 162 872019200.
- 279 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 22 octobre 1987.
- 280 Ibid. State funding went from 411MF CFP in 1987 to 1,025MF CFP by 1991. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.24.
- 281 Ibid.

- 282 Toullelan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.166.
- 283 Michel Ricard: "L'Université française du Pacifique" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.242 tome 20 no.7 mars 1988 pp.53-54.
- 284 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 27 mai 1986.
- 285 Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* p.225.
- 286 Ibid. p.226.
- 287 IEOM: *Exercice 1988. Rapport d'activité. Polynésie française* p.9.
- 288 Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.55.
- 289 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* p.73.
- 290 The total surface area of French Polynesia was then estimated at 352,100ha, of which 36,489 was agricultural land. 25,648ha, or 70.29% of agricultural land was then in use. ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.119.
- 291 Ibid.
- 292 JO. *Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 14 novembre 1988 p.2126.
- 293 IEOM: *Exercice 1989. Rapport d'activité. Polynésie française* p.183.
- 294 Ibid.
- 295 Ibid.
- 296 Ibid.
- 297 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.34.
- 298 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.61.
- 299 *Tahiti-Pacifique* septembre 1993 p.38.
- 300 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 9 mai 1981.
- 301 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.87.
- 302 ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.73.
- 303 *Presence* nos.14-15 4/1989- 1/1990 p.34.
- 304 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 9 mai 1981.
- 305 *Presence* nos.14-15 4/1989- 1/1990 p.34.
- 306 Territorial revenue was 53,133MF CFP. Import tariff proceeds amounted to 23,210MF CFP, and company tax was 5,899MF CFP. ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.174.
- 307 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.9.
- 308 Ibid.
- 309 Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.116.
- 310 Blanchet: *L'économie de la Polynésie française* p.67.
- 311 Of a total territorial workforce in paid employment of 64,006, the 1988 territorial census listed public servants as totalling 22,775 people, of whom 10,736 worked for the territory, 7,258 for the State, and 4,781 for the communes. ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.73. It is not stated whether or not the state servant figure included military and CEP personnel.
- 312 Ibid. p.96.
- 313 In 1989, French Polynesian GDP was 281,667MF CFP. Administrative salaries accounted for 79,536MF CFP. Ibid. p.103. In New Caledonia, administrative salaries constituted 23.99% of territorial GDP in 1988. ITSEE: *TEC 91* p.121.
- 314 Ibid. p.73.
- 315 Ibid. p.96.
- 316 Ibid. p.95.
- 317 Ibid.
- 318 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.36.
- 319 Ibid. p.39.
- 320 Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.27.
- 321 *Presence* nos.14-15 4/1989-1/1990 p.35.
- 322 The total value of territorial exports in 1989 was 24,860MF CFP. Of this total, foodstuffs accounted for 787MF CFP. ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.162.
- 323 Commissariat Général du Plan: *Préparation du huitième plan* p.34.
- 324 Around 80% of French Polynesian pearl exports went to Japan in 1991. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.53.
- 325 These trade barriers are only slowly being removed. For example, in 1993, Japan allowed New Zealand apples to be imported, the first time such foreign-produced fruit had been permitted into the country: Richard Nottidge (New Zealand Ministry of External Relations and

Trade official, delegate to the GATT): "New Zealand's Trade Policy Strategy in the Asia/Pacific Region". Seminar given at the University of Canterbury, 28 May 1993.

326 *New Zealand Herald* 9 November 1991.

327 *Pacnews* 6 November 1991.

328 In August 1992, New Caledonian fruit and vegetable exports were permitted into New Zealand for the first time under an agreement that was the result of detailed consultations between New Caledonian producers and New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Fishery experts. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 22 août 1992. Before that date, New Caledonian exporters had repeatedly been unable to meet New Zealand phyto-sanitary regulations. Discussion with the Secretary at the New Zealand Consulate in Nouméa, September 1992. A similar situation existed in Australia until August 1992 when, after similarly detailed consultations, New Caledonian meat exports were permitted into Australia for the first time. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 22 août 1992.

329 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.

330 Ibid.; IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* p.74.

331 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* pp.74-76.

332 ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.125.

333 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.

334 ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.125.

335 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.

336 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.78.

337 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1990. Polynésie française* p.55.

338 Ibid. pp.55-56.

339 Ibid. p.56.

340 Ibid.

341 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.76.

342 Blanchet: *A Survey of the Economy of French Polynesia* p.14.

343 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.53.

344 Ibid. p.51.

345 ITSTAT: *TEP 91* p.163.

346 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.53.

347 Ibid. pp.43-46.

348 Ibid. p.48.

349 Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.129.

350 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 16 avril 1986.

351 *Pacific Islands Monthly* June 1991 p.15.

352 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.35.

353 Ibid.

354 Ibid. p.36; *Islands Business* June 1991 p.41.

355 *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 p.8.

356 Ibid. June 1991 pp.12-13.

357 Eric Lequerre: "Les phosphates de Mataiva" in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* nos.251-252 tome 21 no.3 septembre-décembre 1990 p.97.

358 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.63.

359 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 15 septembre 1992.

360 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.63.

361 Ibid.

362 See *ibid.* pp.100-101.

363 Ibid. p.102. Robert Kay: *Tahiti and French Polynesia; a travel survival guide, passim.*

364 IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.103.

365 Ibid. p.104.

366 Ibid. p.105.

367 Ibid. p.107.

368 Ibid. p.18.

369 Poirine: "L'échec scolaire des Polynésiens" p.71.

370 Ibid.

371 Ibid.

- 372 Ibid.
- 373 Ibid.
- 374 Ibid. pp.72-73.
- 375 Toullelan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.158.
- 376 Ibid. p.169.
- 377 For the full text of this plan see "Le plan de relance d'Alexandre Léontieff" in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 18 novembre 1987.
- 378 *Pacific Report* 1 September 1988.
- 379 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 13 juillet 1990.
- 380 Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* p.156.
- 381 Territorial revenue amounted to 57,803MF CFP in 1990. IEOM: *Rapport annuel 1991. Polynésie française* p.149.
- 382 The audit was made by the American firm Arthur Andersen and Associates. *Libération* 26 juin 1991; *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1992 p.13.
- 383 *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 p.12.
- 384 The visit by Giscard d'Estaing in July 1979 had cost 19MF CFP. *Le Quotidien de Paris* 13 juillet 1990.
- 385 Braun-Ortega is a prominent businessman in French Polynesia. He was born in Papeete but holds American as well as French citizenship, was educated in Hawaii, and served for four years in the US Navy during the Vietnam War. Flosse incurred his enmity in 1984, when the Flosse Government blocked Braun-Ortega's company, Tahiti Airlines, from gaining a license to operate flights from Papeete, in preference to a renegotiated accord between the Territorial Government and UTA. In 1985, Braun-Ortega decided to enter territorial politics "because I disagreed very strongly with Gaston Flosse's political system". He was elected to the Territory Assembly in March 1986, leading Amuitahiraa no Oceania (Union for Oceania), and joined the Léontieff Government because of its opposition to Flosse. *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1986 p.23; *Libération* 24 février 1987; *Le Monde* 23 juillet 1987.
- 386 *Le Monde* 14 juin 1988.
- 387 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 25 juin 1988.
- 388 *Pacific Islands Monthly* April/May 1989 p.9.
- 389 *Le Figaro* 28 décembre 1988.
- 390 *Keesing's Record of World Events* vol.35 no.5 1989 p.36703.
- 391 Ibid.
- 392 *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 p.2831.
- 393 Ibid.
- 394 Peres: *Histoire de l'évolution des institutions politiques de Taiti à la Polynésie française* part 2 p.13.
- 395 *Pacific Islands Monthly* April/May 1989 p.9.
- 396 *Pacific Report* 6 July 1989.
- 397 "Loi no.90-612 du 12 juillet 1990" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 14 juillet 1990 p.8319; Toullelan & Gille: *Le mariage franco-tahitien* p.151.
- 398 *Le Monde* 16 février 1990.
- 399 Ibid. 25 avril 1990.
- 400 Ibid.
- 401 Ibid. 5 mai 1990.
- 402 Ibid. 10-11 juin 1990.
- 403 Toullelan: *Tahiti et ses archipels* p.204.
- 404 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 20 mars 1991.
- 405 *Le Figaro* 19 mars 1991; AFP communiqué 182143 MAR 91.
- 406 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 20 mars 1991.
- 407 *Islands Business* April 1991 p.15.
- 408 Tavini Huiraatira was established in 1977, under the name Front de Libération de la Polynésie. Until March 1991, it trailed Ia Mana in its level of territorial support. Antagonism has at times been apparent between the two formations, which both contest the right to speak as the representative of the Maohi people. Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.157; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 27 mars 1987.
- 409 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 20 mars 1991.
- 410 AFP communiqué 182143 MAR 91.

as the representative of the Maohi people. Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* p.157; *Les Nouvelles Calédonniennes* 27 mars 1987.

409 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 20 mars 1991.

410 AFP communiqué 182143 MAR 91.

411 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 20 mars 1991.

412 *Le Monde* 17-18 mars 1991.

413 Ibid. 23 mars 1991.

414 Temaru is President of Tavini Huiraatira. He is a territorial customs officer, and since 1983 has also been Mayor of Faaa, the most populous commune in French Polynesia. *Pacific Islands Monthly* July 1985 p.24.

415 Ibid. April 1991 p.18.

416 *Libération* 26 juin 1991.

417 *Le Monde* 25 juin 1991.

418 *Islands Business* August 1991 p.9.

419 *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 p.9.

420 A Tia I Mua is close to the French CFDT. It is a local trade union federation which was founded around 1985 by Hiro Tefaarere. Before founding the federation, Tefaarere had been an employee of the Directorate of General Information, an intelligence branch of the French police. In July 1991, while helping lead the Papeete strike as Secretary General of the union, he was still on the payroll of the Interior Ministry, although it was not known in what capacity. There was some speculation over Tefaarere's possible motives for playing a leading role in the protests, while at the same time being in the employ of the State. *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 p.10; April 1992 p.9.

421 *Le Monde* 12 juillet 1991.

422 As Mayor of Papeete, Juventin claimed no prior knowledge of the use of municipal vehicles for the roadblocks, but also indicated no disciplinary action would be taken against any municipal employees. *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 pp.9, 10.

423 Ibid. p.9; *Islands Business* August 1991 p.38. The latter source lists the demonstrators as numbering around 1,000. Elsewhere their number was estimated at around 500: *Fiji Times* 13 July 1991.

424 *Le Monde* 14-15 juillet 1991.

425 Ibid.

426 *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1991 p.9.

427 "Depuis notre élection, deux formations politiques tentent de déstabiliser le gouvernement démocratiquement désigné. Les indépendantistes d'Oscar Temaru essaient par tous les moyens de créer le désordre. [...] Aujourd'hui, MM Léontieff et Juventin tentent de reprendre dans la rue le pouvoir que les électeurs leur ont ôté en mars dernier." *Le Quotidien de Paris* 12 juillet 1991.

428 *Le Monde* 2 février 1992; *Islands Business* March 1992 p.59.

429 *Le Monde* 2 février 1992.

430 *Islands Business* March 1992 p.59.

431 Ibid. April 1991 p.15.

432 *Pacific Islands Monthly* October 1991 p.20.

433 Ibid.

434 Ibid.

435 *Le Monde* 5-6 avril 1992.

436 Article 77 declared: "Lorsque le budget du territoire n'est pas voté en équilibre réel, la chambre territoriale des comptes, saisie par le haut-commissaire [...] le constate et propose à l'assemblée territoriale [...] les mesures nécessaires au rétablissement de l'équilibre budgétaire. La chambre territoriale des comptes demande à l'assemblée territoriale une nouvelle délibération.[...] Si l'assemblée territoriale n'a pas délibéré dans le délai prescrit ou si la délibération prise ne comporte pas de mesures de redressement jugées suffisantes par la chambre territoriale des comptes [...] le budget est réglé et rendu exécutoire par le haut-commissaire." "Loi no.84-820 du 6 septembre 1984 portant statut du territoire de la Polynésie française" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 7 septembre 1984 p.2831.

437 *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1992 p.12.

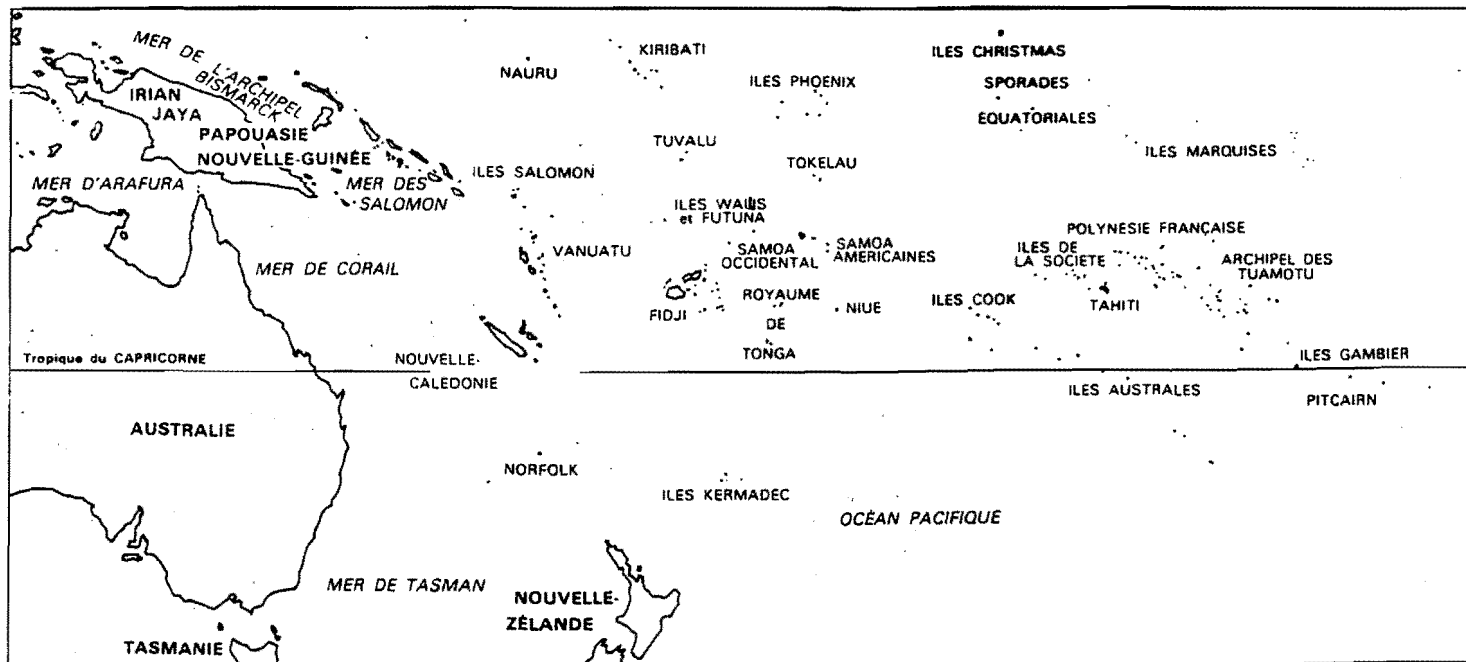
438 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 9-15 avril 1992.

439 Cf. chapter 6 for further analysis of the motives and the international implications of the French testing suspension.

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- 443 RFO Papeete TV news 20 November 1991.
- 444 *Le Monde* 13 avril 1992.
- 445 Ibid. 16 avril 1992.
- 446 *Pacnews* 23 April 1992; *Fiji Times* 24 April 1992.
- 447 *Fiji Times* 12 June 1992.
- 448 Cited in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 10 septembre 1992.
- 449 *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1992 p.12.
- 450 *Le Monde* 16 mai 1992.
- 451 See Polynésie française. Charte du Développement pour le Progrès Economique, Sociale et Culturelle de la Polynésie française: *Etats généraux de lancement. Conclusion des ateliers de réflexion*.
- 452 *Pacific Islands Monthly* November 1992 pp.14-15.
- 453 *Fiji Times* 22 January 1993.
- 454 Ibid. 29 January 1993.
- 455 *Le Monde* 18 septembre 1993. By the time of the first vote on this allocation in the National Assembly in January 1994, the figure had been reduced to 2,420MFF. Ibid. 15 janvier 1994.
- 456 Ibid. 15 janvier 1994.
- 457 Original italics. Poirine: *Tahiti: stratégie pour l'après-nucléaire* p.268.
- 458 *Le Monde* 7 février 1992.
- 459 *Pacific Islands Monthly* November 1992 p.12.
- 460 *Le Point* 24 décembre 1992.
- 461 *Fiji Times* 20 January 1993.
- 462 *Actuel* décembre 1987.
- 463 Ibid.
- 464 *Pacific News Bulletin* December 1992 p.5.
- 465 For details of the various steps in this protracted case see *Le Monde* 23 septembre 1989, 25 juin 1991, 14 février 1992, 20 février 1992; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 16 juillet 1990.
- 466 Von Storkirch: "Suspension of Nuclear Testing: the implications for French Polynesia" p.7.
- 467 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 16 juillet 1990.
- 468 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 8-14 octobre 1992; *Le Quotidien de Paris* 16 juillet 1990.
- 469 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 8-14 octobre 1992; *Le Point* 24 décembre 1992; *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1992 p.6.
- 470 *Le Monde* 25 août 1992.
- 471 Ibid. 30 mars 1993.
- 472 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 6 juillet 1993; *Non-Violence Actualité* septembre 1993 pp.4-5.

Part 2
French Foreign Policy in the South Pacific since 1981

Map 8. The South Pacific



Sources: Raluy *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.4.

5. France and the South Pacific

Le Gouvernement français entend poursuivre avec tous les Etats du Pacifique une politique patiente et persévérante de dialogue qui permette de faire connaître sans ambiguïté la position de la France. Il s'emploie à dissiper les malentendus ou les incompréhensions que pourraient susciter certains aspects de notre politique, je songe en particulier à nos expérimentations nucléaires et à notre présence dans les territoires d'outre-mer. Nous souhaitons, en effet, dans un environnement qui ne nous est pas toujours favorable, développer des relations soutenues avec tous les Etats de la région et réaffirmer dans le même temps, de façon claire, notre position constante: la France est présente dans le Pacifique par le vœu librement exprimé des populations de ses territoires et elle refuse toute ingérence dans ses affaires intérieures.

Claude Cheysson, French Foreign Minister, November 1981.¹

In Pursuit of Dialogue

Although the words above were taken from a statement elucidating the policy of the Mauroy Government on relations with Vanuatu, they none the less offer a lucid, concise summary of French foreign policy goals and motives in the South Pacific since 1981. Cheysson's words were a model of restraint, a quality which was not always apparent in those French ministerial comments on the region reported by the French and South Pacific media. Journalistic coverage preferred to highlight certain immoderate comments which were made at this level when tempers were aroused by criticisms from regional governments over questions such as New Caledonian independence, nuclear testing at Moruroa, or the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing. The remark made by Chirac on 29 August 1986 during a visit to New Caledonia, that Bob Hawke, the Australian Prime Minister, was "very stupid" in his analysis of the territory's situation was one of the more memorable examples.² The importance of such comments should not be overemphasised. As will be demonstrated in this and the following three chapters, successive French Governments since 1981 persevered in developing closer links with South Pacific states while reaffirming their right to exercise unhindered various domestic political prerogatives in the Pacific TOM. Attention in the media devoted to periodic contretemps between Paris and regional governments has tended to obscure generally improving multilateral relations in the period under discussion.³

The wider motives for the maintenance of the Fifth Republic's presence in the South Pacific pose the first concern of this chapter. Examination is made of the explanations proffered as to why France wished to retain its South Pacific possessions into the 1980s and beyond. Cheysson's argument for patient and persevering dialogue to explain France's position and to reaffirm its preparedness to stay on in the Pacific serves as a point of departure for examination of why the Fifth Republic wanted to retain its regional presence. Analysis of the various factors involved endeavours to sort realistic reasons from the affective, erroneous theorising that drove much discourse on this topic. It will be demonstrated that the Pacific TOM held a certain geostrategic interest for Paris, although some estimations of their value by certain figures in the RPR, in the French military, and by private think-tanks, were both overstated and unrealistic.

It should be borne in mind throughout this chapter that while these groups exercised a degree of influence on regional policy since 1981, the dominant strand in this period consisted of government attempts at dialogue and

reconciliation of the sort advocated by Cheysson. While from 1986 to 1988 the Chirac Government differed from its Socialist predecessors over the means deployed to pursue dialogue in the South Pacific, and Chirac's Ministers spelled out in no uncertain terms their objections to what they perceived as interference by regional neighbours in the domestic affairs of the Pacific TOM, this liberal-conservative administration likewise made efforts to improve French relations. Chirac evinced an approval of better French relations and cooperation with the South Pacific that transcended the occasionally testy remarks he made about regional leaders like Hawke. For Chirac, the grandeur of France was intertwined with its global presence, and the South Pacific should not be neglected. While still out of government, on 25 September 1985 he had announced to a public rally in Nouméa:

Il est notre devoir d'être présents et actifs dans le monde, et dans cette région plus que partout ailleurs. A l'égard de nos voisins du Pacifique Sud, la France ne développe qu'un désir de bonnes relations et de coopération. C'est d'ailleurs la nature des liens qui nous unissent avec nombre d'états de cette zone. Et comment oublier les sacrifices que la France a consentis avec, notamment, l'Australie et la Nouvelle-Zélande, hier dans la lutte pour la démocratie et aujourd'hui dans la défense du monde libre? Mais qu'il soit bien clair que la légitimité de la présence de la France - égale à toute autre - ne saurait être contestée dans cette partie du globe ni ramenée à une péripétie de l'histoire condamnée par je ne sais quelle évolution. Ce n'est que sur cette base que peuvent se développer les relations que nous devons entretenir avec nos voisins.⁴

This outlook was consistent with the French regional policy priorities which had been articulated by Cheysson in November 1981. A prominent sign of Chirac's willingness to promote the French presence in the South Pacific came with the appointment in March 1986 of Flosse as Secretary of State to the South Pacific. He was to act as a roving ambassador to countries in the zone, explaining French policy and developing bilateral aid links. As Secretary of State, Flosse would have been hard put to disagree with the position expounded by Cheysson in November 1981. Flosse's mission, as outlined by Chirac in April 1986, (Appendix 8) lay comfortably within the context of French regional policy described by Cheysson over five years before.

The part Flosse played in representing Paris from 1986 to 1988 forms a significant element of the second concern of this chapter: the manner in which France articulated its South Pacific policy. A chronologically-ordered narrative outlines the expansion and revision of French diplomatic structures dealing with the zone since the beginning of the 1980s. To what extent the party policies of the French Left and Right affected governmental management of these structures is ascertained. In spite of structural changes, a degree of continuity in French regional foreign policy conduct, as defined by Cheysson, will be demonstrated.

This background analysis precedes more detailed assessment in chapters 6, 7, and 8, of French policy conduct as it touched on nuclear issues, the question of decolonisation, as well as regional aid and cooperation. France's resistance to South Pacific anti-nuclear sentiment, its refusal to follow what the region presumed to be the precedent offered by British South Pacific decolonisation, and its efforts to increase aid and cooperation will be discussed with reference to the wider foreign policy considerations of dialogue and reconciliation outlined in this chapter. In all three areas, considerable evidence of generally improving French relations with South Pacific states is presented. These improvements are at odds with the adversarial image of French contacts with the region presented by the media in periods of political tension.

The Geostrategic Context

Although at times characterised by French commentators as an aberrant legacy from the days of empire-building,⁵ there has been general agreement among French Governments that the DOM-TOM represent a significant part of the Fifth Republic. Unlike London, which decolonised the bulk of its remaining overseas possessions from the late 1960s, Paris has displayed every intention of retaining sovereignty over its citizens in French *terres de souveraineté* scattered around the world, for as long as those inhabitants might wish to remain French. In the epigraph to this chapter, reference was made by Cheysson to the continued exercise of French sovereignty over the Pacific TOM as constituting a response to "le vœu librement exprimé des populations de ses territoires". According to such thinking, the Pacific TOM, as well as the rest of France's overseas possessions, were primarily French because the majority of their inhabitants desired to stay French. Such democratic principle also coincided with some of the interests of the State. French Governments of the Fifth Republic, whether Gaullist, Giscardian, or Socialist, have all acted on the assumption that the DOM-TOM presented certain advantages to France. Only the extent to which French Governments may or may not have worked to extend these assumed advantages was an issue of extended debate, as remarks made in the National Assembly debate on the DOM-TOM in June 1980 indicated.

Declarations of the importance of ties between metropolitan France and its DOM-TOM were expressed in the 1980s in vigorous terms by UDF, PS, and RPR leaders alike. Various pronouncements mentioned in preceding chapters constitute examples of the expression of a national concern which has transcended party boundaries. Giscard d'Estaing's New Year's message for 1981 to the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM assured them of the Republic's ongoing solidarity with its overseas territories, and stressed the importance they assumed in assuring the French global presence.⁶ As Minister to the DOM-TOM, in July 1986 Pons proclaimed the significance of overseas France, and announced the strengthening of links with metropolitan France after five years of supposed Socialist Government neglect.⁷ Jacques Toubon, as Secretary-General of the RPR, echoed these sentiments in December 1987. He declared that from 1981 to 1986 the DOM-TOM had been let down by government inertia, uncertainty and disorder. With the advent of Chirac, all would be set right.⁸

This interpretation was open to contradiction. Whether reforms in the DOM-TOM endured, as was the case with the Internal Autonomy Statute for French Polynesia, or whether they proved short-lived, as was the case with the Lemoine Statute in New Caledonia, this legislation suggested that France's overseas possessions were a policy priority for the Socialists in government. Since the beginning of the second septennate of Mitterrand, the Socialists have not been heedless of the DOM-TOM either, as their reforms in New Caledonia and French Polynesia suggested. Mitterrand clearly affirmed his high regard for the DOM-TOM during a broadcast on RFO on 26 February 1993:

C'est la France modifiée dans son sein par la présence de centaines de milliers d'habitants d'outre-mer qui lui apportent quelque chose de plus. Donc la France, sans cela, sans l'outre-mer, c'est moins que la France. [...] Je crois que l'outre-mer a besoin de la France; je crois que la France a tout autant besoin de l'outre-mer. Ce qui nous unit est fort. [...] Nous sommes une seule communauté.⁹

The comments made by Giscard d'Estaing, Pons, Toubon and Mitterrand involved official declarations of a banal, predictable nature rather than concise arguments for French sovereignty over the DOM-TOM. These statements serve nevertheless to display the unanimity of PS, RPR and UDF leaders in agreeing on the importance of links between the DOM-TOM and France. Of the major French political parties in the 1980s the PC alone was at variance with this joint stance because of its traditional ideological and moral objections to colonialism.

Near the other end of the French political spectrum, the FN has differed from the UDF, PS and RPR by advocating a tightening of the ties between overseas and metropolitan France, to the extent of proposing the departmentalisation of the Pacific TOM and urging a policy of increased French settlement there.¹⁰

Other statements by political representatives were more significant in that they indicated the direct benefits the State enjoyed through retained sovereignty over the DOM-TOM. Franceschi, speaking in June 1980 on behalf of the PS in the DOM-TOM debate at the National Assembly, pointed out that these possessions permitted France to have the third largest maritime zone in the world, and contended that no one contested their political and strategic importance to the Republic.¹¹ For French Governments a major advantage of the DOM-TOM was that they furnished the Fifth Republic with the means by which it could enjoy a physical presence around the world. This physical presence reinforced French aspirations to continue playing a global role in international relations, in spite of the decolonisation of African and South-East Asian territories since the days of the Fourth Republic.¹² Through its remaining possessions France was not limited to being a European power, although it could hold a presence in the Caribbean, the Antarctic, the Pacific, the North Atlantic and in the Indian Ocean. The DOM-TOM were highly regarded by French Governments for the prospects they offered to enhance French relations with nations in these zones. In 1981, the information service of Prime Minister Raymond Barre portrayed the DOM-TOM as global stepping stones for French culture and technological influence:

*L'outre-mer est une pièce maîtresse du rayonnement international de la France. Par la coopération, les Départements et Territoires d'outre-mer sont appelés à être de plus en plus les meilleurs instruments de la diffusion de la technologie, du savoir-faire, de la culture et de l'influence de la France dans leur zone géographique.*¹³

This statement was as applicable to the Pacific TOM as it was to the rest of the DOM-TOM. From the Pacific TOM, France projected its technological capacity through scientific research and development organisations such as ORSTOM and IFREMER, based in New Caledonia and French Polynesia. France was a major participant in the South Pacific Commission, which had kept its headquarters in Nouméa since 1947.¹⁴ And since 1987 the French University of the South Pacific, with its centres at Nouméa and Papeete, has attempted to offer a Francophone counterpart to the University of the South Pacific, based in Suva.

The part that the Pacific TOM play in promoting French regional cooperation is examined in greater detail in chapter 8, but the assumption that the presence of the TOM might be a necessary instrument for such cooperation deserves more immediate consideration. The emphasis on the need for little extensions of France in regions outside Europe to secure national influence there reflected a peculiar outlook with roots in French colonial history. In the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such enclaves were necessary to European nations which aspired to great power standing, both to assure their own presence and to counter that of their rivals. Not only was the annexation of overseas possessions considered a source of prestige, it served to strengthen national interests. France was prominent in this respect in establishing a collection of dominions scattered around the world which comprised a total population and surface area second only to the British Empire. In the late twentieth century such notions appear dated.

France is the last European nation with significant possessions in the South Pacific. These territories have played a role in French regional cooperation, but possessing these regional bases was not necessarily indispensable. While the French Pacific territories served as centres for French influence in the region, other major powers have managed to promote their presence without such support bases. To the extent that Britain has wished to

retain its regional influence, its lack of such territories has not hindered that country's relations with countries in the zone since the late 1970s. In the 1980s and early 1990s British technology, culture and influence were maintained in the region through various diplomatic posts, participation in the South Pacific Commission,¹⁵ and through Commonwealth links. Japan, the sole Asian power to have occupied parts of the South Pacific, if only from 1941 to 1945, has overcome resentment caused by its imperialism in World War II and during the 1980s established an important and growing technological, commercial and cultural presence in the South Pacific without the benefit of Japanese enclaves there.¹⁶

As outposts for cooperative efforts with the region, New Caledonia and French Polynesia have moreover not been without their drawbacks. Le Pensec pointed out in 1990 that anti-nuclear and anti-colonial sentiment existing in island states in response to French policy in New Caledonia and French Polynesia had acted as a barrier to regional cooperation:

Le fait que le maintien de la souveraineté française sur tel département, tel territoire ou telle collectivité territoriale soit considéré localement comme un sujet majeur de débat politique représente, l'expérience l'atteste, un grave handicap au renforcement des actions de coopération régionale. Le cas de la Nouvelle-Calédonie ces dernières années et, dans une moindre mesure, [...] de la Polynésie française, [...] montrent que, dans un tel contexte, la nature du débat politique local, les relations qui se nouent entre élus locaux et responsables nationaux et la manière dont l'évolution de la situation est suivie à l'étranger sont incompatibles avec une action coordonnée vers l'extérieur.¹⁷

The extent to which this has actually been the case since 1981 will be examined closely in the next three chapters. As will be demonstrated, the point made by Le Pensec is valid only to a degree, as regional anti-nuclear and anti-colonial policies have not posed insurmountable barriers to French cooperation in the South Pacific. None the less, this aspect of French relations should not be overlooked. France's need to pursue "une politique patiente et persévérante de dialogue", as it was described by Cheysson in November 1981,¹⁸ was a necessity not faced by Britain, as its South Pacific nuclear and colonial policies had become matters of largely historical debate by the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁹ Japan, on the other hand, has faced some criticism from island states over its nuclear policies, notably its dumping of nuclear waste in the Pacific. Such protests have not been as sustained as regional opposition to French nuclear testing.

Another stake offered by the DOM-TOM, as mentioned by Franceschi, was the fact that they gave France the third largest EEZ in the world. In 1976, the French Parliament voted for the extension of the French maritime zone to a 200 nautical mile (about 370km) limit.²⁰ This increased the EEZ of metropolitan France to 340,290km², that of the DOM to 648,300km², and that of the TOM to 10,153,825km²; a total of 11,142,415km².²¹ These limits were recognised under the Law of the Sea convention, which was signed by 119 nations in December 1982.²² This agreement recognised sovereign countries' claims to a monopoly over maritime resources within their 200 mile EEZs.

In spite of the massive area France obtained control over under this convention, maritime exploitation was held back as most of the French EEZ in the Pacific encompassed deep waters with no continental shelf.²³ The deep water fisheries of the EEZs of the Pacific TOM have yet to be greatly exploited by the local fishing industry, although territorial administrations receive revenue from selling fishing licenses to US, Japanese and Korean trawlers. Seabed minerals, in the form of polymetallic nodules, including manganese, copper, nickel and cobalt, had been found in the maritime zones of the Pacific TOM by the 1980s. Their drawback was that they were located at depths which rendered

their extraction commercially unviable with the technology available at that time. By 1985, ORSTOM and IFREMER had not conducted a systematic survey of mineral resources in the French Pacific EEZ, and a spokesman for the Fabius Government stated that insufficient data was available to ascertain where seabed minerals might be concentrated. It was considered unlikely that commercial exploitation would be worth the effort at that stage.²⁴ Nevertheless, France was then working to claim international exclusive mining rights over a 75,000km² area outside its EEZ, which it was granted by the International Maritime Resource Authority in December 1987.²⁵ Despite not being commercially viable at that point, France was preparing for a future time when this concession could be exploited.

France has made efforts to safeguard its maritime domain, adopting the long-term view that although its South Pacific EEZ might not yet be worth a great deal commercially, in years to come the zone will be economically valuable. Since the establishment of its 200 nautical mile limit in the South Pacific, France has been careful to negotiate territorial delimitation agreements with neighbouring states in order to secure its boundaries. (Table 50) The Law of the Sea convention left unresolved the question of precisely how the boundaries between the EEZs of two countries should be determined.²⁶ Generally, France has negotiated delimitation agreements which place boundaries at an equidistant point between the closest land in the French Pacific TOM and the closest land of its foreign neighbours.²⁷ An exception to this otherwise harmonious delineation was posed by the New Caledonian boundary with Vanuatu. On 9 and 10 March 1983, an official Vanuatu landing party occupied Hunter Island, a barren rock between the Loyalty Islands and Vanuatu, and hoisted a flag to claim sovereignty over it and neighbouring Matthew Island.²⁸ A plaque proclaiming French sovereignty, which had been placed on Hunter Island in 1975, was removed before the party left.²⁹ Cheysson, then Foreign Affairs Minister, stated that the Mauroy Government did not recognise this claim by Vanuatu, as the two islands had been allocated to France in an agreement with the British Government in 1965, during the days of the condominium of the New Hebrides.³⁰ On 11 March 1983, the High Commission in Nouméa issued a proclamation placing Matthew and Hunter islands off limits to all foreign vessels.³¹ In late March, an unspecified number of French soldiers were transported by helicopter to Matthew Island, the only one of the pair large enough to enable landing troops on, and aerial surveillance was increased.³² A permanent camp was established on Matthew Island, garrisoned by a platoon. This position was still being manned as late as 1989.³³ Hunter was left unmanned, as it is little more than a rock jutting out of the ocean. In stationing troops on Matthew, France was deploying a force, however small, to protect its maritime zone, as neither Matthew nor Hunter islands had any land resources. They are desolate, uninhabited rocks, incapable of supporting anything more than seabirds. Although the Vanuatu claim to the islands was played down by Cheysson as a minor matter, the effort made to secure these two islands indicated the active seriousness with which France watched over its Pacific EEZ.

The DOM-TOM in general are seen by Paris to possess a certain strategic value to the Fifth Republic which justifies their maintenance. Toubon offered a glowing assessment of their worth in December 1987. Like Mitterrand in his RFO broadcast in February 1993,³⁴ Toubon indicated that France would be less than whole without the DOM-TOM:

L'Outre-Mer français, cela ne consiste pas seulement en mesures économiques, en sécurité rétablie, en progrès social. C'est aussi, c'est vrai, un coup de cœur réciproque. La France ne serait pas ce qu'elle est sans les DOM-TOM. Elle leur doit sa présence dans toutes les parties du monde, que ce soit en Amérique, dans le Pacifique, l'Océan Indien ou les terres antarctiques. Par eux,

**Table 50. French Territorial Demarcation
Agreements 1978-1990**

8 August 1978: with Great Britain for New Caledonia and the New Hebrides.
16 April 1980: with Tonga for Wallis and Futuna.
4 January 1982: with Australia for the French Antarctic Territories and New Caledonia.
17 January 1983: with Fiji for Wallis and Futuna.
25 May 1984: with Great Britain (Pitcairn Island) for French Polynesia.
22 September 1986: with Tuvalu for Wallis and Futuna.
3 August 1990: with the Cook Islands for French Polynesia.

Sources: Hervé Coutau-Bégarie: *Géostratégie du Pacifique* p.272; Ministère des affaires étrangères: *Recueil des traités et accords de la France 1986* vol.2 p.1007, 1990 p.97; Ernest Moutoussamy: *Les DOM-TOM: enjeu géopolitique, économique et stratégique* p.99.

elle forme le troisième empire maritime de la planète, sur onze millions de km².

Sans l'Outre-Mer, pas de base de Kourou, pas d'avenir spatial français. Ce n'est qu'un aspect, non des moindres. Mais il ne s'agit pas de spéculer, de compter ce qui s'avère incommensurable. La vocation universelle de notre Nation se situe aussi là-bas. Les DOM-TOM représentent le témoignage concret, bien vivant, que notre héritage, peut servir de bien commun à des peuples très divers, qui nous enrichissent de tout ce qu'ils sont. Notre Outre-Mer constitue la preuve vivante de la chance française à l'échelle du monde, à la veille du XXIème siècle.³⁵

Here, Toubon mixed an assessment of the strategic worth of the DOM-TOM with a dose of Republican idealism. Through the DOM-TOM, France remained a global power. Though Toubon did not mention it here, they offered the Republic a global network of military bases, as well as points for satellite communication ground stations.³⁶ The DOM-TOM have been exploited for the use of high technology. The space centre at Kourou in Guyane was conveniently located near the equator, permitting the easier launch of satellites into orbit.³⁷ The nuclear testing facilities of the CEP in French Polynesia offered a remote location for the testing of nuclear devices. From its commencement in 1966 until its suspension in April 1992, nuclear testing in French Polynesia rendered the territory an important component of the national defence complex. Eighty-four tests were conducted on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls from 1981 to 1991 as six succeeding governments under Mitterrand oversaw the modernisation and expansion of French nuclear capabilities. (Table 51)

In spite of this nuclear presence, the French nuclear deterrent played no role in the military balance of power in the Pacific region. While Moruroa and Fangataufa formed the test sites for nuclear devices, no bases for the French nuclear arsenal existed in the Pacific TOM, or for that matter anywhere else in the DOM-TOM.³⁸ In an interview in 1986 Vice-Admiral Pierre Thireaut, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Pacific Naval Squadron, denied that nuclear weapons were housed at the Moruroa test site, which he described as "only a physics laboratory".³⁹ Thireaut indicated that no nuclear weapon had been detonated at Moruroa since 1974, when France had ended its atmospheric testing there. The components for French nuclear arms were manufactured and assembled in metropolitan France. The nuclear devices exploded in French Polynesia were far from constituting complete weapons. The radioactive and non-radioactive pieces of these devices were manufactured in metropolitan France and assembled at the test sites prior to detonation.⁴⁰ Delivery systems for nuclear arms were not housed in French Polynesia.

The nuclear strike force was deployed for the defence of metropolitan France from foreign aggression and played no part in the defence of the DOM-TOM.⁴¹ Until the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the force was potentially most likely to be used to defend France in the event of an invasion of Western Europe by the Warsaw Pact. Consequently, its target was the Soviet Union.⁴² The French nuclear umbrella did not extend to encompass the Pacific TOM, any more than it did to the rest of the DOM-TOM.⁴³ The most far-ranging component of the French nuclear force, the FOST, consisted in 1993 of three nuclear-powered submarines on patrol at any one time, armed with nuclear missiles.⁴⁴ Based in Brittany, the FOST conducted extended patrols lasting eight to ten weeks. Although its precise deployment was a closely guarded secret, during the 1980s the FOST most likely patrolled the North Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, within missile range - 5,000km - of the Soviet Union. Elements could conceivably have been present in the Pacific from time to time, but there is no declassified evidence to confirm such speculation. Visits to the South Pacific by French submarines not belonging to the FOST were generally rare. The well-publicised calls made to New Caledonia in May 1985 and to French Polynesia in July 1985 by the *Rubis*, a nuclear-powered (and not nuclear-armed) attack

submarine, was the only known instance of such a submarine visit to the region in the 1980s.⁴⁵

The voyage of the *Rubis* in 1985 was portrayed by the Fabius Government as a sign of French intentions of boosting the French military presence in the South Pacific. In 1985 Fabius⁴⁶ shared the position of politicians of the Right and the extreme Right⁴⁷ that New Caledonia lay in a strategically important position adjacent to major shipping lines to Australia and New Zealand. Australian and New Zealand leaders were warned that should control of New Caledonia fall into the hands of a hostile nation, the two countries would be economically threatened. Nouméa however was not as well located for cutting off shipping to Australia and New Zealand as might be imagined. In the outlandish circumstance of a hostile power (Indonesia?) taking over the territory and attacking Australian and New Zealand shipping, trade with Asia could be rerouted from the Coral and Tasman Seas. Both Australia and New Zealand have long, open coastlines which are as difficult to blockade as they are to defend. It was by no means coincidental that this fictional scenario was offered in the mid-1980s, when regional support for independence for New Caledonia had both French Socialist Ministers and figures on the Right searching for reasons why New Caledonia's Pacific neighbours ought to oppose this possibility. This scenario hinged more on these political motives than it offered a rational response to regional security issues.⁴⁸

That announcements concerning the newly found strategic importance of New Caledonia were more a response to Kanak activism and to the anti-colonialist lobbying of South Pacific nations than to any projected foreign threat was confirmed by government unwillingness to act upon its arguments. In 1985 the assertion that New Caledonia was considered in Paris to be of strategic importance was given some credence when plans were announced for the expansion of military facilities there. After his arrival in New Caledonia aboard the *Rubis* on 10 May 1985, Charles Hernu, the Defence Minister, announced plans to extend the international airport runway at Tontouta so that French Jaguar fighter aircraft could land there, as well as proposing the construction of port facilities to enable corvettes and a nuclear attack submarine to berth at Pointe Denouel in Nouméa.⁴⁹ This latter project was described as constituting the construction of a strategic base, the urgency of which was proclaimed four months later in a government decree signed by Hernu and Fabius.⁵⁰ Mitterrand expressed his approval of the plans in 1986.⁵¹ For all the proclaimed urgency of these plans, there has been no consequent sign of haste in Paris to fulfill them. The runway extension at Tontouta was constructed, although by 1993 no Jaguar aircraft had taken advantage of its presence. In 1985 New Caledonia was presented by French military officials and by Hernu as a "French aircraft carrier" in the South-West Pacific.⁵² If this were the case, the territory has been curiously lacking in combat aircraft. The few Mirage III fighters to use the airstrip at Tontouta in the 1980s were planes from a visiting RAAF squadron, which made a stop in transit from New Zealand in March 1983.⁵³ The Fabius Government projected that 400MFF would be spent on naval facilities. This plan failed to be translated into reality.⁵⁴ By March 1987 it was surmised that plans for the strategic base had been abandoned, in spite of Chirac's expression of support for it in 1986.⁵⁵ Although no official announcement was made on the matter, a mixture of budgetary constraints and the realisation that the proposal constituted geostrategic pie in the sky were probably the motives for this inaction. If indeed New Caledonia did have strategic potential, Paris has not availed itself of the opportunity to fulfill it. It is more probable that the proposal formulated by Hernu was a response to Kanak activism than to any imminent or remote foreign threat.⁵⁶

Geostrategic arguments as marginal as those applied to New Caledonia have not been advanced to support the military presence in French Polynesia. The importance of the test programme was in itself adequate to vindicate that

**Table 51 French Nuclear Tests
1981-1991**

	Date	Location	Yield (kt)¹
1981:	27 February	Moruroa	8
	6 March	Moruroa	2
	28 March	Moruroa	5
	10 April	Moruroa	8
	8 July	Moruroa	20
	11 July	Moruroa	8
	18 July	Moruroa	2
	3 August	Moruroa	15
	11 November	Moruroa	3
	5 December	Moruroa	5
	8 December	Moruroa	15
1982:	20 February	Moruroa	3
	20 March	Moruroa	15
	27 June	Moruroa	2
	1 July	Moruroa	20
	21 July	Moruroa	2
	25 July	Moruroa	55
1983:	19 April	Moruroa	40
	25 April	Moruroa	1
	25 May	Moruroa	40
	18 June	Moruroa	3
	28 June	Moruroa	35
	20 July	Moruroa	10
	4 August	Moruroa	8
	3 December	Moruroa	4
	7 December	Moruroa	15
1984:	8 May	Moruroa	20
	12 May	Moruroa	55
	12 June	Moruroa	2
	16 June	Moruroa	35
	27 October	Moruroa	3
	2 November	Moruroa	35
	1 December	Moruroa	1
	6 December	Moruroa	55
1985:	30 April	Moruroa	15
	8 May	Moruroa	90
	3 June	Moruroa	10
	7 June	Moruroa	5
	24 October	Moruroa	2
	26 October	Moruroa	20
	24 November	Moruroa	5
	26 November	Moruroa	55

¹ Estimated maximum possible yield. Figures mainly from the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research seismographic station in Rarotonga.

1986:	26 April	Moruroa	5
	6 May	Moruroa	5
	27 May	Moruroa	4
	30 May	Moruroa	30
	10 November	Moruroa	6
	12 November	Moruroa	25
	6 December	Moruroa	9
	10 December	Moruroa	30
1987:	5 May	Moruroa	5
	20 May	Moruroa	30
	6 June	Moruroa	3
	21 June	Moruroa	15
	23 October	Moruroa	50
	5 November	Moruroa	20
	19 November	Moruroa	60
	29 November	Moruroa	3
1988:	11 May	Moruroa	20
	25 May	Moruroa	80
	16 June	Moruroa	5
	23 June	Moruroa	30
	25 October	Moruroa	2
	5 November	Moruroa	50
	23 November	Moruroa	40
	30 November	Fangataufa	100
1989:	11 May	Moruroa	15
	20 May	Moruroa	2
	3 June	Moruroa	20
	10 June	Fangataufa	70
	25 October	Moruroa	25
	31 October	Moruroa	20
	20 November	Moruroa	30
	27 November	Fangataufa	90
1990:	2 June	Moruroa	30
	7 June	Moruroa	3
	26 June	Fangataufa	100
	4 July	Moruroa	20
	14 November	Fangataufa	120
	21 November	Moruroa	35
1991:	7 May	Moruroa	10
	18 May	Moruroa	60
	29 May	Fangataufa	110
	14 June	Moruroa	30

Sources: Burrows *et al.*: *French Nuclear Testing, 1960-1988* pp.33-37; Delius, Ulrich: *SOS Moruroa: les essais nucléaires français dans le Pacifique* pp.88-89; Smith, Warwick: "Underground Nuclear Explosions in the Tuamotu Archipelago" pp.2-4; *The Press* 15 June 1991.

presence without recourse to additional justification. The sort of theorising applied to New Caledonia would have been fanciful in any case. Scenarios of projected foreign invasion seemed even less probable when applied to French Polynesia than to New Caledonia. French Polynesia was geographically isolated even by South Pacific standards, positioned far from major shipping routes in the North Pacific. The territory lay too distant from South America to constitute an offshore base of any threat to Latin American security in the event of a French decolonisation. Military bases in French Polynesia, with the exception of the naval and army bases at Papeete which date from the nineteenth century, were constructed to serve the operations of the CEP. Airfields at Papeete, Hao, Fangataufa and Moruroa were used for the transport of staff and material to and from the testing sites, as was the port at Moruroa.⁵⁷

Maintaining the internal security of the Pacific TOM, rather than defending them against any marginal risk of foreign aggression, formed a major task for French military units stationed in the South Pacific. In Wallis and Futuna, the deployment of gendarmes to Mata Utu during the state of emergency declared in October 1986, and to Futuna in October 1993, were the only two incidents in the period under discussion when this consideration had any bearing on the territory. French gendarmes in French Polynesia were at times employed to quell industrial unrest in Papeete. French Navy vessels stationed in the territory were used to patrol the waters around Moruroa, and to track Greenpeace and other anti-nuclear protest vessels, a task that they performed from the first Greenpeace protest there in 1972, until the tests held in 1991.⁵⁸ In New Caledonia, gendarmes were in the front line of confrontations with the FLNKS during its violent protest actions from 1984 to 1988. Regular army troops were not involved in the troubles during 1984 and 1985, although they were available for the control of any potential insurrection should the need have arisen. Regular army troops played a part in efforts to pacify and monitor rural tribes from 1986 to 1988 in the "nomadisation" programme implemented under the Chirac Government.⁵⁹ The changing number of troops stationed in New Caledonia during the 1980s reflected the seriousness with which the potential for insurrection was regarded in Paris. The Chirac Government in particular staged a proportionately large build-up of ground forces in the territory. In 1979, the total number of military personnel in New Caledonia, including gendarmes, had been 2,472 men.⁶⁰ During the 1980s, numbers far exceeded this level. In late November 1984, at the time of the FLNKS active boycott, there were 2,826 army personnel present, of whom 1,300 were gendarmes, and the remainder were regular army.⁶¹ This force was strengthened the following month with eight companies of CRS.⁶² The military presence in New Caledonia peaked during the time of the FLNKS active boycott from April to June 1988. By 24 April 1988 there was a combined total of 10,990 CRS, gendarmes and regular army personnel deployed in New Caledonia; one for every 14 local inhabitants.⁶³ As a result of the Ouvéa incident, this command was reinforced with 100 further gendarmes, a platoon of GIGN and 150 Marines.⁶⁴ This was a sizeable force, and was instrumental in prompting the FLNKS decision to back down from its active boycott. By the end of the following year, after the lessening of tensions under the Matignon Accords, this French force had been considerably reduced. (Table 52)

While land forces deployed in New Caledonia were expanded in response to internal unrest, the French military in the South Pacific was too thinly spread to guard against external aggression. The French naval squadron, of which the most powerful components were its three frigates and five patrol boats, was a small unit with which to guard a maritime zone of 6.78Mkm² (Tables 1, 23, 33) composed of three territories separated by thousands of kilometres. Nor were the small forces in the French Pacific TOM evenly spread. While New Caledonia and French Polynesia had army, air force and naval elements in their garrisons, Wallis and Futuna had no permanent French military

presence other than half a dozen gendarmes stationed there on police duties. The Pacific squadron was the smallest of the French Navy fleets stationed overseas. Its commander in 1993, Vice-Admiral François Querat, stated that it represented 5% to 6% of the total means of the French Navy.⁶⁵ The squadron had minimal air cover, with only surveillance aircraft to provide long-range support, the rest of the aircraft present in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia consisting of helicopters and cargo planes. (Table 52)

When compared to the French Indian Ocean fleet, the modest nature of the French air and naval commitment to the South Pacific becomes more apparent. At times in the middle of the 1980s, the French Indian Ocean fleet was larger than that of the Soviet Union in the zone. The French fleet usually consisted of a destroyer, five frigates, a submarine, a fast attack craft, an amphibious assault ship, a naval workshop vessel, two supply ships and two oil tankers. Air support was provided by a fighter squadron equipped with seven Mirage IIIs, and two squadrons of helicopters and transport craft.⁶⁶ The heavier commitment of French forces in the Indian Ocean than in the South Pacific was a reflection of the former's greater strategic importance to France. French units stationed at Djibouti and Réunion guarded the shipping route leading from the oil fields of the Persian Gulf through the Suez Canal.⁶⁷ The Gulf War of 1991 demonstrated the threat that instability in the Middle East posed to this strategically important route. No trade in the South Pacific held the same importance to French economic interests as the protection of the oil trade in the Middle East.⁶⁸ Neither did French forces in the South Pacific face the immediate threat of foreign aggression disrupting French regional trade.

If the French Pacific military was unlikely to face foreign aggression and was not deployed in great enough strength to guard its huge zone from external threat, it might legitimately be asked what in fact its role was. Four official explanations were offered by Vice-Admiral Thireaut in 1988. The conventional military role was given last.⁶⁹ Internal security duties were not mentioned, to avoid giving the impression that the domestic situation of the Pacific TOM was unstable. The functions described by Thireaut as forming the duties of the French military in the South Pacific appeared instead to be quite banal although useful.

He pointed out the diplomatic utility of naval visits. The attendance of French warships at national events such as independence day celebrations in the region was usually the result of invitations by island leaders, and these calls offered good opportunities as flag-waving exercises for the Republic.⁷⁰ French warships attended the Australian bicentenary celebrations in February 1988,⁷¹ and were regular attendants at self-government anniversary celebrations in the Cook Islands.⁷² Such ceremonial visits formed part of a wider policy of warship visits to foreign ports in the South Pacific to promote the French regional presence. French vessels stationed at Papeete are regular visitors to the Cook Islands. They have not simply paid courtesy calls, but have been used to transport sick Cook Islanders to hospital in Papeete, and to help with French development efforts to the islands.⁷³

Thireaut described the second mission of the French Pacific forces as entailing cyclone relief, both to the French Pacific, and to foreign island states.⁷⁴ The French military has lent its support to cyclone recovery efforts in Wallis and Futuna, for which it has assigned army and navy personnel from Nouméa.⁷⁵ French legionaries from Papeete were posted to Rarotonga in January 1987 to help with recovery from cyclone Sally, and French naval vessels were used to ship heavy machinery and supplies from Papeete.⁷⁶ In September 1986 the *Jacques Cartier*, a transport landing ship, was sent from Nouméa with food and medical supplies after cyclone Namu hit the Solomon Islands.⁷⁷

These efforts represented the limits of French military contacts with nations of the South Pacific until the beginnings of changes from the late

**Table 52. French Military Forces in the South
Pacific
1989**

Pacific Naval Squadron

Command: Papeete

Commanding Officer: Vice-Admiral (also acts as
Commander-in-Chief of armed forces in French Polynesia)

Three frigates; *Commandant Birot* (A69), *Amiral Charner*
(F727), *Enseigne de Vaisseau Henri* (F749)

New Caledonia station:

2 P-400 patrol boats; *La Moqueuse* (P688), *La Glorieuse*
(P686).

1 Bâtiment de Transport et Soutien (BTS); *Bougainville*
(L9077). Holds 1 Engin de Débarquement pour Infanterie et
Chars (EDIC) landing craft and can carry 2 Puma
helicopters

1 Batral class landing craft; *Jacques Cartier* (L9033). Can
carry 180 men and 12 vehicles

2 oceanographic research vessels; *Boussole* (A781),
L'Estafette (A766)

2 Gardian long-range surveillance aircraft

French Polynesia station:

Papeete:

3 P-400 patrol boats; *La Gracieuse* (P687), *La Railleuse*
(P689), *La Tapageuse* (P690)

1 Batral class landing craft; *Dumont D'Urville* (L9032)

1 gendarme coastguard vessel

1 oceanographic research vessel

3 Gardians

1 Alouette III helicopter

Moruroa:

5 supply tenders; *Tapatai* (A779), *Taape* (A633), *Chamois*
(A767), *Rari* (A634), *Revi* (A635)

3 coastal tugs; *Maroa* (A636), *Maito* (A637), *Manini* (A638)

3 oil tankers; *Papernoo* (A625), *Punaroo* (A632)

3 EDIC landing craft; L9051, L9072, L9074

2 light patrol boats

1 Alouette

French Air Force Pacific Wing

New Caledonia:

100 personnel
2 C-160 Transall transports
2 Alouettes
4 Puma helicopters

French Polynesia:

550 personnel
3 Caravelle transports
3 Alouettes
3 Pumas

Army Units¹

Command: Nouméa

Commanding Officer: General (also acts as Commander-in-Chief of armed forces in New Caledonia)

New Caledonia:

1,530 regular army personnel
1,100 gendarmes
298 transport vehicles
10 Panhard armoured cars
5 armoured personnel carriers²
5 105mm howitzers

French Polynesia:

1,854 regular army personnel
900 gendarmes
77 transport vehicles

Sources: Jean-Michel Boucheron: *1990-1993 Programmation militaire* pp.338, 339, 341; The International Institute for Strategic Studies: *The Military Balance 1990-1991* p.66; Nic Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the Pacific" in *Interdisciplinary Peace Research* vol.2 no.1 pp.5-8.

¹ Figures do not include CRS, who were under the command of the High Commissioners in Papeete and Nouméa, or Papeete and Nouméa's municipal police.

² Wheeled riot control vehicles armed with a machine gun each, used by the gendarmes.

1980s.⁷⁸ French military cooperation in the Pacific generally was not well developed before this time.⁷⁹ Two decades after de Gaulle had partially withdrawn the Republic from NATO in 1966, and had refused to participate in SEATO,⁸⁰ the Fifth Republic under Mitterrand retained a Gaullist stance of avoiding participation in military alliances in which French interests would have been subordinate to those of the USA.⁸¹ This stance had its implications for the Pacific, as well as for other regions of strategic interest to France. Given the preponderance of US military strength in the Pacific, France could only have been a subordinate partner in any regional military alliance there. France therefore played no part in defence pacts in the South Pacific, of which the most prominent was ANZUS.⁸² French Pacific forces did not regularly exercise with Australian, New Zealand or Pacific island forces.⁸³ France had no programme to compare with the network of military exchange, training and assistance schemes that Australia, New Zealand and the US had implemented in the island Pacific.

The patrolling of the French Pacific EEZ was the third role described by Thireaut, a major undertaking given the expanse of this zone.⁸⁴ As was the case with the RNZN in New Zealand's EEZ, rather than a vigil against foreign invasion, the monitoring of fishing trawlers in territorial waters was the principal concern of this effort. Thireaut listed the protection of the Pacific TOM against invasion as the fourth role of the forces under his command. He pointed out that his forces were intended to hold open access to ports and airports so that reinforcements could be despatched from metropolitan France.⁸⁵

This point represented a tacit admission that forces already present were inadequate to defend the Pacific TOM in the event of invasion. Whether French forces could be deployed to the Pacific TOM rapidly enough and in adequate numbers to counteract foreign invasion is open to doubt. The Gulf War revealed the logistical difficulty, among other problems, that the French military had in deploying units in the Middle East. French commanders faced problems with insufficient supplies, uniforms and equipment adapted to a hot environment, and long-range transport aircraft.⁸⁶ France experienced problems sending from its 300,000 strong army fewer than 10,000 ground troops to the Middle East, problems that call into question its ability to defend its farther-flung DOM-TOM.⁸⁷ Similar logistical problems to those experienced in the Gulf War, accentuated by the greater distance involved, would be confronted in the event of having to deploy a large force from metropolitan France to defend the Pacific TOM.

Admittedly, the chances of such an operation being needed were extremely low. German surface raiders in World War I and Japanese expansionism in the Pacific in the 1940s represented the only concrete foreign military threats to the French Pacific in the twentieth century. Statements during the 1980s made by French admirals, both in service and retired, affirming that the Pacific was a key strategic zone, threatened by the possibility of Soviet expansionism,⁸⁸ tended to portray the French Pacific as being more directly concerned than it actually was. They omitted mention of the extreme logistical problems that would be involved in the organisation of Soviet aggression. Soviet naval bases in the Pacific maritime provinces of the USSR, and at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, were far removed from New Caledonia, the closest Pacific TOM. Vietnam lies over 7,000km from Nouméa, while Vladivostok is situated over 8,000km away. The US Pacific Command had the upper hand strategically in that Soviet bases were restricted by their geographical location. Ship movements could be monitored easily as Soviet vessels had to pass through narrow straits linking the Sea of Japan and the South China Sea with the Pacific Ocean. Soviet operational capacities were limited by the cold climate of the Soviet far east. Ports there were ice-bound during winter. The Soviet far east was thus not a well-located area from which to launch military operations in the South Pacific.⁸⁹ Soviet concerns were more immediate: the protection of its own

borders,⁹⁰ and the peaceful development of relations with its Asian neighbours.⁹¹

It is moreover uncertain what gain the Soviet Union might have made from infiltrating the island South Pacific. The region was not abundant in readily exploitable strategic resources. Its fisheries were an attraction, although Moscow had no need to stage a major regional incursion to pursue this resource. Those mineral resources to be found in the South Pacific, such as New Caledonian nickel, were more easily and cheaply available to the Soviets from deposits in the Soviet Union. The USSR was a long way from exhausting its own resources in the 1980s, and Russian economic exploitation of these remained unfulfilled in the early 1990s.

Superpower rivalry in the 1980s did not directly affect the South Pacific, still less the Pacific TOM. Soviet Navy penetration of the South Pacific in the 1980s was minimal. Incursions by its surface vessels or submarines in French Pacific waters were rare. The last official visit by a Soviet warship to the Pacific TOM was made to Nouméa in 1970.⁹² A Soviet submarine was sighted in French Polynesian waters in November 1982, but this was a rarity.⁹³

Various conservative politicians attempted in the 1980s to inflate the minimal Soviet presence in the South Pacific into a menace in order to call into question the defence conduct of Socialist Governments. For example in November 1982, in response to the sighting of the Soviet submarine, a written question was tabled in the National Assembly by an RPR Deputy, Bruno Bourg-Broc. He postulated: "On assiste en effet au développement de la présence de bateaux de la flotte soviétique dans nos eaux territoriales du Pacifique." Then he asked what measures the Mauroy Government intended to take. Two months later Hernu gave an unruffled reply: "Aucun bâtiment de guerre de la marine soviétique n'a été localisé à proximité de la Polynésie et de la Nouvelle-Calédonie au cours des dernières années et le nombre des escales effectuées par des bâtiments de commerce - en général des paquebots - n'a pas varié, restant à un niveau faible."⁹⁴ This comment remained valid ten years later. By the 1990s, Japanese and Korean trawlers represented a more important foreign maritime presence in the French Pacific EEZ, whereas the Russian presence was still marginal. The most visible sign of Russian maritime activities in the Pacific TOM were the cruise liners which regularly made calls to Nouméa.

Other conservative French politicians, none of whom held prominent positions in the formulation of French foreign policy in the 1980s, showed a predilection for painting dark scenarios of Soviet expansion to counteract the arguments of sceptical governments in the South Pacific that the French military was present in the region merely to shore up what were perceived as French colonial interests. Pierre Lacour, the Senator for Charente, published a book in 1987 in which he asserted that the Soviet Union was conducting a systematic campaign of infiltration in the South Pacific.⁹⁵ He called for greater unity between the United States, Australia, New Zealand and France, claiming that an erosion of the French presence in the zone would open an avenue for Soviet penetration.⁹⁶ Flosse, as Secretary of State to the South Pacific, offered the same message in early 1988, and suggested that the United States, Britain, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and France should form a defence pact against this eventuality.⁹⁷ He and other commentators pilloried Australia and New Zealand for advocating anti-nuclear and anti-colonial policies in the region during what was portrayed as a time of peril.⁹⁸

Nor was the suggested Soviet threat portrayed as purely military by conservative French commentators. In 1984 Jacques Baumel, a former Gaullist Minister and an RPR Deputy, assumed that communist influence was not necessarily just external. He projected one scenario for the future as being the subversion and balkanisation of island states by Marxist agitators,⁹⁹ presumably backed by the Soviet Union. Flosse, as Secretary of State to the South Pacific, warned of the need for vigilance against trade unionist Fifth columnists inspired

by Moscow. He stressed the need for unity against "l'offensif communiste classique des organisations syndicales largement politisées".¹⁰⁰

Such analyses were not vindicated in the 1980s. Internal unrest in the South Pacific came from groups which were difficult to portray as communist agitators: Fijian nationalists led by Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka, who led two coups in 1987 to assert indigenous dominance over the growing local influence of Indian immigrants; Kanak nationalists in New Caledonia; and tribal landowners on Bougainville Island who from 1989 led a rebellion against the refusal of the PNG Government to give greater compensation for mining rights. South Pacific island states were unpromising ground for the penetration of Marxist-Leninist thinking.¹⁰¹ Communists played no role in the democratic institutions of South Pacific nations. Unlike metropolitan France, no South Pacific nation had Communist Party representatives in its parliament. Where Communist parties were present, as was the case in Australia and New Zealand, they were small, fractious groups preoccupied with arguments over which of them was the truest bearer of the Marxist flame. The persistence of traditional hierarchical social structures and values in most island states rendered their leaders unreceptive to Marxist social values which would in any case have been ill-adapted to South Pacific societies. The Marxist theory of class struggle in nineteenth century European industrialised countries was not easily applicable to the predominantly rural, agricultural, subsistence societies to be found in the South Pacific in the late twentieth century.

Neither before nor since such conservative French speculation in the 1980s that the Soviet Union was practising a campaign of regional destabilisation has much concrete evidence been presented to back the assumption. From the 1970s the Soviet Union opened diplomatic relations with various newly-independent island states, although these steps did not lead to an entrenched Soviet regional presence. Soviet relations established with Fiji in 1974, Tonga in 1975, and with Papua New Guinea as well as Western Samoa in 1976, did not involve sending resident ambassadors to these countries.¹⁰² Permanent Soviet diplomatic representation consisted of two Embassies, one in Wellington and one in Canberra. New Zealand and Australia regarded with unease Soviet negotiations for fishing contracts with island states, considering them as the possible beginning of further penetration, even though little came of them.¹⁰³ Soviet fishing deals with island states ended up being less important than those that New Zealand and Australia had themselves concluded with the Soviet Union. Apart from the use of some ports in the region for its fishing trawlers, the Soviet Union had no bases in the South Pacific. Nor was there any great reason for it to want to construct such bases. The USSR had no client states in the South Pacific, and none eventuated.

With hindsight, it is easy to ridicule the scenario of a Soviet menace. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and its subsequent balkanisation into a grouping of quarrelsome, economically unstable states, the spectre of Soviet expansion no longer haunts the South Pacific. Faced with more pressing internal social and economic problems, Russia has abandoned its arms race with the United States. As part of its global dismantling of overseas bases, Moscow is reducing its naval forces at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, the closest of its bases to the South Pacific, and plans a total withdrawal by 1995.¹⁰⁴

Talk of Soviet expansion in the South Pacific in the 1980s by figures on the French Right consisted of little more than a series of politically-motivated, unrealistic scenarios. These images cannot be said to have exerted an important influence on the regional defence policy of French Governments since 1981, but merit discussion in depth as they prompted much erroneous theorising. In a search for the motives behind the French military presence in the South Pacific, grandiose strategic reasoning was in many regards a red herring set up by conservative parliamentarians and military leaders to influence government and public opinion. Their images of the French Pacific forces offering a bulwark

against the advance of the Soviet Union, and assuring regional security, are, under examination, ultimately less convincing as a *raison d'être* than the effective roles the military performed. French Pacific forces played their part in the maintenance of the Fifth Republic's global network by maintaining a minimal but effective vigil over the largely unexploited maritime resources of the Pacific TOM, guarding and manning the facilities of the nuclear test programme, and by keeping law and order during times of domestic unrest. Their role in realising Cheysson's goal of the pursuit of patient dialogue and cooperation with regional neighbours consisted of providing civil emergency and developmental aid, and representing France in the region.

A New Centre of the World?

Just as the military importance of the French Pacific was exaggerated by figures with vested political or career interests, so too misrepresentation has been evident in official and unofficial French evaluation of the economic significance of the Pacific TOM. In the early 1980s certain figures in Paris shunned Cheysson's simple, ungrandiose, democratic justification for a French Pacific presence, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, in favour of an overstated picture of the commercial value of the region to the Republic. The Parisian Institut du Pacifique, a private body founded by retired military men and civil servants, campaigned for greater recognition of the region in government and business circles. For its members, the consideration that the Fifth Republic was present in the South Pacific because it was the wish of the inhabitants of the Pacific TOM was not adequate reason in itself. The French Pacific was instead considered important because of the opportunities the greater Pacific region offered for French trade and investment. The humble scale of most economic activity in the Pacific TOM, and the troubles state planners were having there trying to encourage the productive diversity upon which export-orientated prosperity might be founded, were cast aside for a macro-economic view engulfing the entire Pacific rim, where the potential for prosperity was presented as enormous.

In its influential book published in 1983, *Le Pacifique, nouveau centre du monde*, the Institut du Pacifique presented its case for the need for greater French participation in the Pacific basin. As well as being portrayed as an area of great power rivalry,¹⁰⁵ the zone was characterised as a centre of enormous resources, rapid economic growth, and as being of great market potential for France.¹⁰⁶ It was contended that the centre of global power was inexorably shifting away from Europe to the Pacific. The former's stake in global affairs was declining while the latter would be the new centre of gravity in the twenty-first century that Europe had been until the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁷

All was not lost however. It was pointed out that although Paris had traditionally neglected its trade and diplomatic interests in the Pacific in preference to concentrating on areas closer to metropolitan France, the Republic was still "une nation riveraine du Pacifique" thanks to its three TOM there.¹⁰⁸ France retained the opportunity to become a major player in regional affairs if it made a concerted effort to expand its presence in the Pacific basin. This should be done through greater cooperation with regional organisations such as ASEAN, the South Pacific Forum and the Andes Pact, and through the exploitation of France's privileged position as a major participant in the EEC.¹⁰⁹ As well as greater French liaison with the region through multilateral relations, improved bipartite relations should be pursued, including with countries sceptical of France's regional presence, such as the island nations of the South Pacific. Increased trade and cooperation with these states could dissipate misunderstandings.¹¹⁰ The dire alternative to an increased regional presence, it was argued, was that France would become progressively marginalised and excluded from Pacific affairs, which would be a step further along the path of

France's declining influence as a global power since the early twentieth century.¹¹¹

The arguments laid out by the Institut du Pacifique should not be excluded from discussion of French South Pacific policy because of their non-official nature. The views that the organisation offered concerning the Pacific had considerable bearing on the field of French regional policy, and their echoes are to be found in statements by political leaders of the Left, Centre and Right during the 1980s. In 1984 Lemoine offered an optimistic image of a New Caledonian future which resembled an extract from *Le Pacifique, nouveau centre du monde*:

[...] nous avons ici un pays à construire [la Nouvelle-Calédonie] pour lui permettre d'aborder la fin du siècle avec toutes les chances qui vont s'ouvrir dans le Pacifique qui prendra de plus en plus d'importance dans les affaires du monde, compte tenu des puissances qui l'entourent, de leurs immenses populations et des richesses en hommes et en étendues marines. Le Pacifique est à la dimension du monde du XXI^e siècle et de grands esprits lui voient déjà jouer dans les temps qui viennent le rôle dans l'histoire de l'humanité qu'a joué la Méditerranée pour les pays de l'Europe lorsqu'ils dominaient le monde. Le centre de gravité se déplace et demain les grands courants économiques, les échanges, les marchés seront peut-être de plus en plus transférés dans le Pacifique.¹¹²

In the introduction to a book published in 1983 which stressed the growing importance of Asia and the Pacific, Raymond Barre too lent his support to the thesis that the Pacific was becoming the predominant zone in the world and that France should play a greater role in this evolution.¹¹³ Mitterrand¹¹⁴ and the RPR¹¹⁵ were in agreement on this point, and Rocard has recognised its value.¹¹⁶ Although none of these sources attributed their ideas to the Institut du Pacifique, it is evident that the theme of the Pacific as a new centre of global power formed a concept that was accepted in Paris in high places.

The case for the Pacific as a new centre of the world should be examined critically to assess its applicability to, and impact on, the French role in the South Pacific. While the theory offered a clear economic rationale for French regional diplomacy and integration, it also contained numerous analytical flaws which, like its premises overall, were to find echoes in the official articulation of French Pacific policy.

The term "Pacifique", as used by the Institut du Pacifique, is open to scrutiny. In *Le Pacifique, nouveau centre du monde*, the zone was defined as encompassing over 45% of global GNP, and half the population of the world.¹¹⁷ The Pacific community was defined as all the countries in the Pacific or with coastal borders on the Pacific, and included land-locked countries hundreds of kilometres from the ocean, such as Mongolia and Bolivia, on the grounds that they had dealings with Pacific nations.

Yves Lacoste, a French geographer, cast doubt upon the validity of the arguments of the Institut du Pacifique from a geographical perspective. He questioned the inclusion of various peripheral nations in the Pacific region. He also asked whether the United States and the Soviet Union could be considered purely Pacific powers when the bulk of their populations and economic activity were not concentrated there.¹¹⁸ Lacoste considered the organisation's definition of a Pacific community as inflated and described its presentation as the largest economic and population zone in the world as the product of "artifices statistiques".¹¹⁹ Lacoste admitted that globally important trade had grown between Japan and North America, and pointed out the expanding importance of South-East Asian trade with these two nations and Australia, but questioned whether such developments warranted description as an identifiable Pacific economic community.¹²⁰

His arguments were well-founded. The rapid economic growth which took place during the 1980s in Asian nations on the Pacific rim did not have parallels in the Pacific TOM, Australia, New Zealand or South America. During the 1980s, trade from the Pacific TOM was directed more to metropolitan France than to Pacific nations. French incursion into the three largest markets of the South Pacific was low. In 1983, French trade represented 2.7% of the Australian market, 1.5% of the New Zealand market, and 0.5% of the PNG market.¹²¹ There was no prospect of French initiatives to increase trade with the island states of the South Pacific reaping the great profits that a stake in Asian economic growth might accrue. The French trade that had developed with these states of the South Pacific by the early 1990s was appropriately minor. Setting aside Vanuatu, where French trade was long-established from the colonial period, by 1993 there had not been a remarkable degree of French investment in the island states of the South Pacific. In accordance with their relative importance in regional trade, of the island states Papua New Guinea and Fiji enjoyed the greatest amount of trade with France. By 1993 there were eight French companies which had directly invested in Papua New Guinea, and four in Fiji.¹²² In 1992 French imports from Papua New Guinea were worth 31.66MFF, while French exports to Papua New Guinea amounted to 22.44MFF.¹²³ French imports from Fiji that year were worth 1.99MFF, while French exports to Fiji were valued at 50.19MFF.¹²⁴ In proportion with the small population and resource bases of island states, French trade with them was on a small scale. For example in 1992, French imports from Tuvalu were valued at 0.18MFF, while French exports to the island amounted to 0.07MFF.¹²⁵ In the case of Nauru, both French exports and imports were worth 0.07MFF.¹²⁶ French trade with Kiribati included 0.01MFF worth of imports and 14.63MFF worth of exports, while the respective figures for Tonga were 0.02MFF and 0.16MFF.¹²⁷ In the 1990s the island Pacific remained dependent on high levels of foreign aid and was one of the least economically advanced regions in the world, constituting an unpromising area for major French trade expansion.

The geographical reductionism involved in grouping disparate countries under the umbrella of a Pacific super region by French commentators was an action which obscured the physical distances between states with vastly different economies, cultures, and governments.¹²⁸ The validity of the concept of the Pacific as a single community was difficult to accept. Culturally as well as economically, the asserted unity of this community was a fiction.¹²⁹ An Aleutian Eskimo, a Chinese peasant, an Australian sheep farmer and an Easter Islander have little in common other than their labelling by the Institut du Pacifique as inhabitants of this supposed Pacific community. In such a large grouping, the island micro-states of the South Pacific tended to be ignored in preference to attention concentrated on social and economic trends in Asia.¹³⁰

In discussion below of French policy on the Pacific, it is important to bear in mind that the South Pacific was in some cases assumed by politicians in Paris to be part of a much larger Pacific entity, even though the globally significant parts of that greater entity may have been distant from the South Seas. This attitude was evident in analyses by Baumel and Flosse mentioned earlier. They on occasion portrayed the French military in the South Pacific as being directly affected by superpower confrontation in the North Pacific, even though several thousand kilometres separated these elements. The references above to Lemoine, Barre, the RPR, Mitterrand and Rocard also showed similar signs of geographic reductionism. As much as anything else these examples illustrate the analytical shorthand that must be adopted, and the misleading impressions it can give, when referring to large expanses of the world. The same reductionism was evident when French politicians talked of French African policy, assuming that a single policy could be uniformly applied to the varied situations of African countries. The assumption made by the Institut du

Pacifique that the Pacific was a homogeneous entity was not adopted as a consistent argument in the foreign policy of French Governments from 1981.

Nevertheless, Asia and the South Pacific have been considered by French diplomatic structures to be part of a single entity, if only for administrative purposes. Traditionally, Pacific foreign affairs were handled by the Quai d'Orsay under its Asia and Oceania directorate.¹³¹ The Asian section of the directorate had greater administrative resources at its disposal due to its coverage of major nations such as Japan, China, Indonesia and India. The Oceania subdirectorates, created in 1978, was among the least well-staffed subdirectorates at the Quai d'Orsay, and consisted of three to five personnel in the 1980s.¹³² In the 1980s, there existed a growing awareness in the diplomatic corps that the South Pacific constituted a separate entity, with its own issues. Charles-Henri Montin, then the Political Counsellor at the French Embassy in Wellington, was careful in 1985 to distinguish between France's differing relations with various countries in the Pacific basin, and shied away from going so far as to state that these relations were evidence of an overall Pacific policy:

In spite of [...] enthusiasm shown in France by our learned analysts of new trends, it is not possible to speak of an overall policy for the Pacific, taken as a whole. France, like other industrialised countries, has strong economic ties with countries of the North Pacific such as the United States, Canada, and Japan, but they do not really stem from their Pacific location but rather from their own intrinsic economic significance.

Also, there does not seem to be the same community of approach to problems in the North Pacific as there is in the South Pacific. [...] Therefore I would hesitate to say that France has an overall Pacific policy, but we are certainly trying to define a policy for the South Pacific.¹³³

Jean-Pierre Gomane, the co-founder and Vice-President of the Institut du Pacifique, has described France as having an "impressionist" Pacific policy, in the sense of it looking acceptably coherent from a distance, while not standing up to close scrutiny.¹³⁴ In asserting this, he was not necessarily highlighting a deficiency in French foreign policy. Given the scope of the word "Pacifique" as defined by Gomane and his colleagues, it was not surprising that France should not have possessed a unified policy for such an enormous geographic area. It is questionable whether France could define a coherent Pacific policy, any more than it could formulate a coherent Eurasian policy.

As the American historian Robert Aldrich has pointed out,¹³⁵ the outlook of the Institut du Pacifique was part of an intellectual trend in the 1980s that was not restricted to France. The idea of a forthcoming "Pacific century" had its roots in Japan and California in the 1970s,¹³⁶ where postwar economic prosperity led to the articulation of the belief that better was yet to come there. Such thinking has tended to ignore the South Pacific.¹³⁷ The islands of the South Pacific had little importance in global trade, and were of marginal economic interest compared to the commercial activities of North America and Asia.¹³⁸ Californians had become less optimistic by the early 1990s. The Los Angeles riot of April 1992 was a symptom of racial disharmony in the State. A state fiscal crisis, declining employment opportunities in the defence and aerospace industry due to the end of the Cold War, increasing unemployment generally, and a slump in real estate prices, contributed to the depressed socio-economic condition of California by 1993.¹³⁹ Japan has experienced a slowing rate of economic growth in the early 1990s as its rapidly developing Asian neighbours - South Korea, China, and Taiwan - became increasingly competitive exporters on the international market. While neither California nor Japan was in decline, it was by no means manifest that they would enjoy the same economic prosperity in the twenty-first century that they experienced from the 1950s to the 1980s. Nor was the economic growth of various South-East Asian countries without its difficulties. Industrialisation had been accompanied by increased environmental

destruction and pollution, the collapse of traditional agriculture, and an increasing gap between rich and poor. Political unrest had not diminished in the region, as evidenced by civil disturbances in China, Thailand and Myanmar since the 1980s.¹⁴⁰ A decade after the promotion of the image of a Pacific century, it appears that aspects of that vision as it might apply to North America and parts of Asia may not live up to expectations.

Aldrich pointed out that as an intellectual trend, the vision of the Pacific as a new centre of the world was by no means a new one. The theorising of the Institut du Pacifique had its forerunner in the lobbyists of the Parti Coloniale, who were active in metropolitan French politics in the 1880s. What Aldrich described as "a round of Pacific mania" followed the publication at that time of two books by Paul Deschanel, a French Deputy who became President of the Third Republic in 1920.¹⁴¹ Deschanel's message in the 1880s, like that of the Institut du Pacifique a century later, was that France's destiny as a global power was at stake in the Pacific. Either the Republic could boost its presence in the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, and French Polynesia in the face of rivalry between the regional powers of the day (Britain, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands), or it could let itself be marginalised and shut out, to the detriment of its future as a global power.¹⁴² Yet in the century that followed, France neither greatly boosted its South Pacific presence, nor saw itself shut out of the zone. The Pacific Ocean represented a less important part of its global presence than its African and Asian colonies, and it is debatable whether the global grandeur of France suffered as a consequence. This consideration should be borne in mind when contemplating millenarian predictions concerning the French role in the Pacific in the twenty-first century.

Taken to the extreme offered by the Institut du Pacifique, arguments for the presence of the Fifth Republic in the South Pacific in the 1980s were vague, theoretically ill-conceived, nostalgic for a level of global grandeur which France no longer enjoyed, and consequently somewhat removed from reality. French diplomats like Montin who worked in the South Pacific had ample reason to be sceptical of such analyses and to sarcastically refer to their proponents as "our learned analysts of new trends".¹⁴³

For all the unabashed boosterism of the Institut du Pacifique, stripped of extreme attendant assumptions, the basic assessment drawn by the organisation concerning the French stake in the Pacific region was correct. As a result of the presence of the Pacific TOM, France undeniably had and retained a stake in the zone. Faced with a changing international scene, France found itself in search of a new set of relations in the region, to replace those that it had previously formed with Britain, the last of its European rivals to decolonise.

French Regional Diplomacy

Discussion in the preceding two sections of the reasoning behind French foreign policy in the South Pacific has drawn on unofficial discourse and theorising to serve as contrast to the positions of French Governments since 1981. Considerable effort has been made to dispel both misleading official and unofficial assessments of the French military and economic role in the zone in order to gain a clear picture of why France was still present there. In the course of this analysis, it has been demonstrated that while some arguments offered by French political leaders and commentators were erroneous, France had certain tangible interests in the South Pacific which it desired to protect. Continued French sovereignty over its possessions there assured satisfaction of the desire of French citizens in the Pacific TOM to stay French, enabled the maintenance of a French nuclear deterrent, the guardianship of whatever resources lay beneath the extensive French Pacific EEZ, and assured the Fifth Republic bases for the regional projection of French political, economic, scientific and cultural influence. As Cheysson indicated in November 1981, the best method to protect

such French interests when confronted with criticisms from nations in the South Pacific was to engage in patient dialogue on French policy. This chapter's final section considers the administrative structures which Paris deployed in response to its desire to further dialogue with, and to promote its interests to, the nations of the South Pacific.

A common assumption expressed in the 1980s was that Paris was in the process of belatedly rediscovering the South Pacific. The Institut du Pacifique asserted in 1983 that this circumstance was part of a wider rediscovery of Asia and the Pacific by Mitterrand and the Mauroy Government, after years of governmental neglect of those areas under the Fifth Republic.¹⁴⁴ Actually, the stirrings of greater official interest in the Pacific date back to the 1970s. As was evident in the Eighth Plan for the DOM-TOM, published in 1980, greater regional integration of the Pacific TOM was already deemed a laudable goal in Parisian administrative circles before Mitterrand's presidency. In 1979 the Dijoud Plan for New Caledonia had also advocated regional integration, emphasising the desirability of a reduction in New Caledonian isolation from its Pacific neighbours. Improving communications, increasing commerce, and promoting more scientific, cultural and technical exchanges with the South-West Pacific was stated to be a major priority.¹⁴⁵ A necessary preliminary step to the attainment of this goal, both for New Caledonia and for the other two Pacific TOM, would be the extension and improvement of French diplomatic relations in the South Pacific. Under the presidency of Giscard d'Estaing, certain initiatives were taken in this domain.

A meeting took place late in December 1978 which was a forerunner to the different high-level committees formed in the 1980s to discuss Pacific policy. The meeting combined officials from the Quai d'Orsay and from the rue Oudinot. There had since the 1940s been liaison between the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of the DOM-TOM where French foreign policy interests coincided with the administration of the Pacific TOM. The main example was provided by French decisions on matters arising from the South Pacific Commission, which included in its domain the French TOM. Officials from both Ministries had represented France in meetings of the Commission since its foundation in 1947, and interministerial discussions had regularly been held in Paris on the French response to matters concerning the Commission.¹⁴⁶ At the meeting on Pacific policy in December 1978, the French High Commissioners of the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, and French Polynesia, as well as the Superior Administrator of Wallis and Futuna, and the Ambassadors to Australia and New Zealand attended alongside various Ministers. The group endorsed the Dijoud Plan and discussed wider French cooperation in the South Pacific.¹⁴⁷ The activities of Dijoud in the South Pacific as Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM were not limited to the internal administration of the Pacific TOM and the implementation of reforms there. During two regional tours in June and September 1979 he visited Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea to discuss French policy with government representatives.¹⁴⁸ Discussions by Dijoud involved fending off criticisms of French nuclear and decolonisation policies as well as offering an update of reforms in the Pacific TOM and in the New Hebrides.

This was by no means the first visit by a French Secretary of State to the region to articulate French regional policy. As Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, Olivier Stirn had visited Australia and New Zealand in March 1975 to defend French nuclear testing and to brief government officials in Canberra and Wellington on his forthcoming administrative reforms.¹⁴⁹ Papua New Guinea, which had attained independence in 1974, was also the target of French diplomacy. In June 1976, Bernard Destremau, the Secretary of State to Foreign Affairs, had visited Port Moresby to inform the PNG Government of France's wish to develop closer links in the region. He was following up an announcement, made by the French Embassy in Canberra in 1975, that Paris

was contemplating establishing diplomatic representation in Port Moresby.¹⁵⁰ Destremau inquired about the prospect of establishing a diplomatic post in Papua New Guinea.¹⁵¹

This visit was an early sign of France's interest in expanding its diplomatic network in the South Pacific, which since the end of World War II had centred on two Embassies, one in Canberra and another in Wellington. Prior to British decolonisation, two posts had been adequate, as relations with the island states could be conducted via British, Australian or New Zealand channels. As various islands attained sovereignty in the 1960s and 1970s, it became apparent in Paris that a new set of relations would have to be formulated with the emergent states of the South Pacific. At first this was done by accrediting the French Ambassador in Wellington to island states. Formal French relations with Western Samoa, Fiji, and Tonga, were established in 1971 by these means, followed by Papua New Guinea in 1976, then Nauru and Tuvalu in 1979.¹⁵²

While accreditation was adequate for the exercise of contacts with the smallest nations in the region, for larger countries it was decided in Paris that permanent representation would be more appropriate. Papua New Guinea, as a mineral-rich country with the largest population in the zone after Australia and New Zealand, appeared a logical site for an embassy. Although a diplomatic post was established in March 1978,¹⁵³ two years passed before a resident ambassador took up duties there. This delay was largely due to the reluctance of the PNG Government to associate too closely with France. PNG Government representatives had attacked French handling of the decolonisation of the New Hebrides in 1979, and were opposed to ongoing French nuclear testing.¹⁵⁴ These differences did not prove to be insurmountable, and an ambassador was eventually appointed. On 12 November 1980 Antoine Colombani, the first French Ambassador to reside in Port Moresby, had his credentials accepted.¹⁵⁵

The French Embassy at Port Moresby was one of three French Embassies created in the South Pacific in 1980. The second Embassy was in Port Vila, where Yves Rodriguez took up his posting as the first French Ambassador to Vanuatu on its independence in 1980. In view of the French colonial heritage in the islands, and the French-speaking community in Vanuatu, Port Vila was a natural choice for an ambassadorial posting. In spite of troubled bilateral relations during and in the months immediately following decolonisation, Paris wished to maintain cordial contacts with Port Vila, partly to support the survival of French language and culture in Vanuatu.¹⁵⁶

The third ambassadorial posting was to Fiji. In June 1980 Robert Puissant became the first resident French Ambassador in Suva.¹⁵⁷ There were varied motives for installing an ambassador there. Fiji's geographical position was one aspect. The islands lie roughly central in the South-West Pacific, at the hub of regional shipping and air routes. After Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, Fiji had the largest population of any South Pacific island state. It was also a major force in island politics. Suva had played a large part in the formation in 1971 of the South Pacific Forum, the first multilateral political grouping established in the zone, and had emerged as a prominent regional participant in the Lomé Convention, a trade and development agreement set up in 1975 between the EEC and African, Caribbean and Pacific nations.

The establishment of three new ambassadorial posts in the South Pacific was a major step forward for the exercise and development of French policy there. Though none of them were created by a Socialist Government, the Port Moresby, Port Vila and Suva embassies were to serve as contact points with island states and were instrumental in furthering French regional relations under Mitterrand. In the wider scheme of French global diplomacy, such measures were of a small-scale nature, but along with the cross accreditation of the French Ambassador to New Zealand during the 1970s, these three embassies offered signs of increased French diplomatic activity in the South Pacific which

preceded the advent of Mitterrand. The South Pacific had not been a major concern in the workings of Fifth Republican foreign policy because of a combination of historical precedent, and geopolitical concerns from 1958 which kept French attentions and priorities preoccupied elsewhere. The decolonisation of Africa, the Cold War in Europe, relations with NATO since de Gaulle partially withdrew France from it in 1966, and European integration, to name just four broad areas which dominated French foreign policy, required a far greater deployment of state resources than did the South Pacific. Comments to the effect that the South Pacific had been neglected should be viewed in the context of these larger concerns.

During the French election campaigns of 1981, the foreign policy issues which were the subject of debate were far removed from the South Pacific. The prominent topics of that period included European integration, relations with the United States and the Soviet Union, and areas of instability such as Nicaragua, Afghanistan, and Poland. Giscardian foreign policy had been dominated by the place of France in Europe.¹⁵⁸ The PS Cr teil manifesto of January 1981 offered noble sentiments advocating the reduction of the arms race between East and West while expressing support for French nuclear deterrence, the promotion of European integration, the maintenance of solidarity with developing nations, particularly in Africa, and the preservation of French cultural and democratic traditions in the world. It had nothing to say on the Pacific.¹⁵⁹ Mitterrand's 110 Propositions called for superpower withdrawals from Afghanistan in the case of the Soviet Union, and from Latin American dictatorships in the case of the United States. Support was expressed for the Polish trade union movement, peace in the Middle East and the independence of Chad. These issues constituted the concern of the first five Mitterrandian propositions. Numbers 6 to 13 concerned disarmament, the establishment of a more just global economic order, and France's place in Europe, while points 105 to 112 considered nuclear dissuasion, NATO, relations with the Soviet Union, China, the Mediterranean, Africa and Quebec.¹⁶⁰ Again, no specific mention was to be found of the South Pacific. These points accurately reflected major French external interests in the early 1980s. When Mitterrand took over the presidency in 1981, his immediate foreign policy concerns touched on the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, and did not extend to the South Pacific.¹⁶¹

South Pacific affairs were none the less not entirely absent from the attentions of the Socialist Government. From 4 to 8 May 1982, a special conference was held at the Quai d'Orsay on Asia and the Pacific. This meeting followed the lines of that organised under Giscard d'Estaing in late 1978. High officials associated with the Asia-Pacific region gathered to discuss what role France should play there.¹⁶² The meeting arrived at similar conclusions to that of 1978. The need for greater French participation in the zone was reiterated, particularly if France did not wish to be excluded from the benefits of economic growth there. Cheysson underlined the importance of greater French economic activity in the region. Mitterrand took interest in this conference, and met with the various diplomats involved for two hours on 7 May.¹⁶³

Mitterrand was not to pay a presidential visit to the South Pacific until his brief stop in New Caledonia on 17 January 1985, which was more concerned with domestic TOM policy than with foreign relations. Prior to that though, he did send an envoy to the South Pacific to explain French policy. His choice of spokesman was an interesting one. R gis Debray had established his reputation in the 1960s as a fellow traveller of the Cuban revolution, and was as much admired on the French Left as he was reviled on the Right for the time he had spent in the Bolivian jungle with Ch  Guevara. A staunch opponent of what he characterised as Yankee neo-colonialism in Latin America, Debray had written theoretical works on guerilla warfare on the basis of his experience.¹⁶⁴ Mitterrand employed him as a presidential advisor on Latin American affairs, an

appointment which must have surprised state officials in Washington. From 1983, Debray was assigned the South Pacific as well.

In June 1983, Debray toured the region to explain French nuclear policy to regional leaders, and to inform them of developments in government policy in New Caledonia. From 13 to 23 June, he met leaders in Port Vila, Suva, Wellington, Canberra and Port Moresby, including Prime Minister Lini of Vanuatu, Jonati Mavoa, acting Fijian Foreign Minister, Robert Muldoon, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Prime Minister Hawke, and Mr Nilkare, the acting PNG Foreign Minister.¹⁶⁵ Debray proposed that a South Pacific delegation of scientists inspect the test facilities at Moruroa to allay any suspicions about their safety, explaining that Mitterrand had decided to continue testing to strengthen the French nuclear deterrence in the face of persistent superpower rivalry. The offer was accepted by New Zealand, Australia and Papua New Guinea.

The irony of a figure who had opposed Yankee neo-colonialism in Latin America since the 1960s, acting in the 1980s as an apologist for what leftists in the South Pacific described as French nuclear colonialism, was not lost on some commentators. It was pointed out that various conservative Australian leaders were to the left of Debray in their desire to end French nuclear testing and to see the decolonisation of New Caledonia.¹⁶⁶ It is fascinating to gauge through Debray the extent to which the cultures of the French Left and that of the South Pacific Left were divergent. Gough Whitlam, the former Australian Prime Minister, highlighted the differences speaking as the ALP delegate to a meeting of the Socialist International in Copenhagen from 24 to 26 April 1984.¹⁶⁷ Whitlam derided the French Socialist Government for its continuation of nuclear testing, and described French sovereignty over its Pacific territories as an "anomaly".¹⁶⁸ Whitlam portrayed these aspects of the French Pacific presence as chauvinist, backward, colonialist and conservative. It is a characterisation which was to be reiterated by Labor Ministers, as is discussed further in chapters 6 and 7.

Debray on the other hand preferred to view the French South Pacific presence positively, emphasising internationalism and progress. In harmony with political figures of the Centre and Right, he lauded the Pacific TOM for their usefulness as ground stations for satellite communications and summed them up as bases for "un important potentiel technologique, scientifique et culturel que nous pouvons mettre à la disposition de la région".¹⁶⁹ In the same vein, he characterised resistance to the French regional presence as reactionary:

Il est vrai qu'il y a un rejet massif de la présence française prenant prétexte du nucléaire, et qui s'ancre dans ce qui fait l'unité de l'Océanie: une mentalité religieuse, une éthique anglo-presbytérienne, synthèse entre le droit coutumier des insulaires et la morale biblique des missionnaires de Londres. Le tout relayé par l'Université de Suva aux Fidji, jusqu'à présent la seule du Pacifique Sud, qui a formé toute l'élite politique de la région depuis 30 ans et pour qui le nucléaire est simplement immoral. Le rejet est d'ordre mytho-affectif.¹⁷⁰

Debray's analysis contained various simplifications and inaccuracies. While both tribal and church leaders in the South Pacific were opposed to French testing, his attribution of regional anti-nuclear sentiment solely to a combination of Protestantism and tribal law was overly narrow. As will be discussed in depth in the following chapter, regional opposition to French nuclear testing has been based on more than moral objections. There were genuine scientific uncertainties that could be expressed about its safety, independent of any custom or religious ethics. It was likewise inaccurate to describe the USP as having formed all the political elite of Oceania during the preceding 30 years. For example while Prime Minister Walter Lini of Vanuatu, a vocal critic of French testing, had received the mix of Presbyterian and tribal upbringings described by Debray, he had

never attended tertiary courses in Suva. Nor was the USP the only university in the region where certain students might assert anti-nuclear sentiment. The University of Papua New Guinea, to name just one other example, was a centre for anti-colonialist and anti-nuclear sentiment as well.¹⁷¹

Although his understanding of regional anti-nuclear activism contained flaws, Debray reiterated the message that Cheysson had offered in November 1981. Regional fears of, and distrust with, aspects of the French presence in the South Pacific would be overcome by patient dialogue:

Il faut traiter ces Etats avec considération, dans un esprit d'ouverture et de dialogue, alors que jusqu'à maintenant on a eu tendance à vivre en camp retranché, en affrontant le Pacifique des années 80 avec la mentalité des années 60. [...] Mais nous ne devons pas avoir de complexe ni nous excuser d'être là.¹⁷²

Debray agreed with the geostrategic analysis of the Pacific made by the Institut du Pacifique. He portrayed the Pacific as a single entity, stressing the economic and resource potential of the zone for France. He also shared ground with the French conservative politicians and military officials who hung the spectre of possible Soviet expansionism over the region:

Le Pacifique est vide d'hommes, mais l'océan est plein. De protéines, d'énergie, de nodules polymétalliques. 23 millions d'habitants sur un tiers du globe, avec ici et là des pays de 25km², cela semble un peu dérisoire. Mais avec l'extension à 200 milles marins, la France est la troisième puissance maritime du monde parce qu'elle est aussi un pays du Pacifique. Et l'océan sera au XXI^e siècle une ressource capitale. Le «*complexe interarmées*» en construction [sic] à Nouméa est tourné vers l'avenir. La stratégie a horreur du vide; s'il n'y a pas encore de menace extérieure sur le Pacifique Sud, il aurait pourtant tort de se considérer comme miraculeusement protégé. L'URSS a déjà signé un accord de pêche avec Kiribati, et les Etats-Unis n'ont plus le monopole de la force navale dans le Pacifique Nord.¹⁷³

These were ironic words from a man who in the 1960s had backed Castro's Cuba, a base for Soviet military penetration in the Caribbean. Here Debray could be compared to a Pentagon spokesman warning against the potential for Soviet infiltration in the Americas, although no Soviet client state eventuated in the South Pacific to enable regional Soviet destabilisation of the sort that led to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. Debray's discussion of the potential value of French maritime resources in the twenty-first century was a more valid projection, assuming the technology and the need to exploit it would exist. In both respects however, France was portrayed as taking a long-term view of its place in the Pacific.

Before 1985, it was difficult to assess what Debray's superior, Mitterrand, thought of France's role in the South Pacific. His attention was preoccupied with other matters for the first three years of his presidency. Presidential statements on the region were limited to reiteration of French resolve to continue nuclear testing, and his attitude to the question of New Caledonian independence on the occasion of visits to the Elysée by regional heads of government. Such was the case in discussions with Muldoon on 17 June 1981 and 9 May 1983, and with Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the Prime Minister of Fiji, on 11 March 1982.¹⁷⁴

From 1985, Mitterrand took a more active interest in the region. The catalysts for this greater interest were the political troubles in New Caledonia, and the debacle of the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing which, along with ongoing nuclear testing, contributed to a nadir in French relations with South Pacific states. Mitterrand's first two presidential visits to the South Pacific,¹⁷⁵ his stop in New Caledonia on 19 January 1985 and his first visit to Moruroa in

September 1985, offered visible signs of presidential support for the Fabius Government at a time when the French stance on nuclear and decolonisation issues had rendered it widely unpopular in the zone. The presidential trip to New Caledonia had no direct bearing on French foreign relations, being devoted to internal politics; such was not the case with the second trip.

Mitterrand, accompanied by Hernu and Roland Dumas, then Foreign Minister, arrived at Moruroa on 14 September, at the height of controversy over French responsibility for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing. It was the first presidential visit to the atoll since de Gaulle had been there in September 1966. In part, the presidential tour highlighted the importance of the DOM-TOM in the development of French high technology, although this technology was not without its hitches. En route to French Polynesia, the party stopped at Kourou in Guyane to attend the abortive launch of an Ariane rocket.¹⁷⁶ The Moruroa visit involved an inspection of the facilities of the CEP. No nuclear test was conducted in the presence of the President in September 1985. In this respect Mitterrand's itinerary differed from that of de Gaulle nineteen years before.

While at Moruroa, Mitterrand presided over the first meeting of the South Pacific Coordination Committee, which had been created on 8 September 1985. The members of the Coordination Committee were similar to those who had participated in the Asia-Pacific policy conference in 1982. In addition to the President, the Defence Minister and the Foreign Minister, in attendance were Pierre Joxe, then Interior Minister, Pisani, and Lemoine. French Ambassadors to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the United States, Fiji, and Vanuatu attended, plus civil and military government officials working in the region. In spite of the presence of the Ambassador to Japan, the Asian content of the earlier conference had been separated to allow greater concentration on the South Pacific. The choice of Moruroa as a meeting place for such an assembly of high officials was a novel one, although the subject of discussions was similar to the Asia-Pacific conference, and concerned French economic, cultural and diplomatic relations. The general aim of the South Pacific Coordination Committee was to serve as a forum for the ongoing review of French regional policy. The body was intended to meet again in four months.¹⁷⁷

Michel Vauzelle, the presidential spokesman, gave the impression that the meeting served as an affirmation of France's will to remain in the Pacific, and to pursue such policies as were deemed appropriate, without bending to regional pressure: "la souveraineté de la France ne peut pas être remise en cause [...] personne ne peut se substituer à sa volonté lorsqu'il s'agit de ses intérêts dans le Pacifique".¹⁷⁸ The projected installation of the strategic base at Nouméa was suggested to be a sign of the French will to preserve its regional interests. Mitterrand's own declaration, delivered on his return from Moruroa, indicated that France would make its own decisions concerning its Pacific presence, in the same manner as the other great powers in the region. He stressed that France would be increasing its role in the zone.¹⁷⁹

The presidential trip received the approval of UDF and RPR leaders. Giscard d'Estaing described Mitterrand's comments on the French presence in the South Pacific as encouraging after the proposal for independence in association for New Caledonia announced by Pisani on 7 January 1985. Charles Pasqua, then President of the RPR group in the Senate, portrayed the voyage as an affirmation of the French South Pacific presence which formed a justifiable riposte to regional critiques.¹⁸⁰ Mitterrand's expression of French aims in the Pacific was made in terms which the UDF and RPR found difficult not to agree with.

The Moruroa meeting of the South Pacific Coordination Committee was to be its first and last. At a Council of Ministers meeting on 23 December 1985 the Committee was replaced by the South Pacific Council. This new body was to have a wider brief than acting as a forum for the consideration of policy. The Council of Ministers announced that the South Pacific Council "contribuera à

affirmer la présence de la France et à assurer la défense de ses intérêts, dans le dialogue avec ses partenaires de la région".¹⁸¹ Nevertheless the South Pacific Council had a similar membership to its predecessor. (Appendix 7) The President presided over council meetings, which were to be held either in the Pacific TOM or in Paris. Alongside the various Ministers, Ambassadors and High Commissioners, provision was made for the participation of the French Polynesian Territorial President, and of the New Caledonian Territorial Congress President. The Council was assigned a Secretary-General, chosen by the President. His initial choice turned out to be Debray, who was appointed to the post on 18 January 1986. Debray presided over the first meeting of the South Pacific Council in Paris on 26 February 1986.¹⁸²

This first meeting considered a draft decree for the establishment of a French University of the South Pacific, and adopted a programme for the reinforcement of French scientific cooperation.¹⁸³ The activities of the South Pacific Council were cut short by the installation of the Chirac Government in March 1986, although council projects were not discarded. The South Pacific Council itself was allowed to gather dust on the sidelines as Chirac and his Ministers would have nothing to do with it.¹⁸⁴ Any prospect of Chirac and Pons, as well as André Giraud, the new Defence Minister and Jean-Bernard Raimond, the new Foreign Minister, discussing an area as potentially controversial as South Pacific policy, at a meeting presided over by Mitterrand, and accompanied by Debray, was an unpromising one for all concerned. For the Chirac Government, the South Pacific Council did not offer an inspiring forum for the formulation of French policy. Had the Council been used, it is probable that its meetings would have been stultified by the same glacial ambience which hampered sessions of the Council of Ministers from 1986 to 1988.¹⁸⁵ The Chirac Government did not act to dissolve the South Pacific Council, perhaps because this step would have added another contentious issue to relations that were already tense in the novel setting of cohabitation.

The South Pacific Council was effectively replaced by the Chirac Government even though it had not been formally dissolved. Chirac presided over a new body for the consideration of South Pacific policy: the Interministerial Committee devoted to the South Pacific. The Committee included Flosse, Raimond, Pons, Giraud, the Minister of Cooperation and the Finance Minister. For the Chirac Government the advantage of this body over the South Pacific Council was that policy could be discussed without the attendance of Mitterrand. The group met at irregular intervals to consider topics such as the establishment of the French University of the South Pacific, aid to Fiji, and the opening of a Consulate in Hawaii.¹⁸⁶ A second group which considered Pacific policy under cohabitation was the conference of high officials and French diplomats working in the South Pacific. This body was reminiscent of the South Pacific Coordination Committee, except that again the President was not a participant. These conferences were held in the Pacific TOM. Three were held during cohabitation; the first at Papeete in November 1986, the second at Nourméa in May 1987, and the third in French Polynesia at Huahine in March 1988.¹⁸⁷ Discussions concentrated on how to respond to regional discontent with French policy in New Caledonia and over nuclear testing, and provided opportunities to announce various aid initiatives.

Under cohabitation the domain of French foreign policy became affected by a power struggle between the head of state and the head of government, just as DOM-TOM policy was. In the case of foreign affairs though, Mitterrand was in a stronger position to influence Chirac. Constitutional practice gave the President supreme control of the armed forces, which meant that Mitterrand could not simply be excluded from the formulation of defence policy, or from international disarmament negotiations. His role as head of state likewise meant he could not be excluded from dealings with bilateral and multilateral organisations, and he continued meeting foreign representatives. This situation

led to some unprofessional incidents, such as deciding who should represent France at EC summits, and tiffs over the relation of the Elysée to the Quai d'Orsay,¹⁸⁸ but French foreign policy was not greatly disrupted by cohabitation. To a great extent, Mitterrand and Chirac agreed on the broad issues of foreign policy.

This level of broad agreement can be discerned in the conduct of South Pacific policy from 1986 to 1988. A different style was evident in the handling of this domain by the Chirac Government that has been mistakenly interpreted as indicative of a "new South Pacific policy". Stephen Bates, an Australian academic, wrote that under Chirac France completely reversed standing New Caledonian policy and French relations with independent island states.¹⁸⁹ Such an assertion is inaccurate. Pons carried out the self-determination referendum scheduled for New Caledonia by the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, and like its Socialist predecessors the Chirac Government was not prepared to hand independence to a Kanak minority. Rather than representing a complete reversal, such policy contained major elements of continuity. With regard to foreign policy too, the installation of a new government in Paris did not alter the interpretation of French regional interests. As had been the case since 1981, during cohabitation the French Government worked to explain French positions on nuclear testing and decolonisation, while increasing cooperation and integration with South Pacific states, in broad continuity with French policy orientations as characterised by Cheysson in November 1981. Aid and development work undertaken from 1986 to 1988, described as signs of new French relations in the South Pacific, was not without precedents, whether Giscardian or Socialist, in spite of wider distribution during this period.

Rather than relying on Debray to articulate French policy, on 20 March 1986 Chirac chose to appoint Flosse to a new ministerial-level post: Secretary of State charged with the Problems of the South Pacific. Flosse's title was indicative of how the region was regarded by the Chirac Government as problematic. Following the rise in 1985 of regional lobbying over New Caledonian self-determination, the creation of the Rarotonga Treaty and the advent of the *Rainbow Warrior* affair, under the Fabius Government the South Pacific had become a touchy area that needed tending. In accordance with the criteria outlined by Cheysson in November 1981, the Chirac Government moved to dissipate regional opposition to the French presence via dialogue and improved cooperation.

The decision to appoint Flosse showed a willingness to tackle French "problems" in the South Pacific from a new angle. Previous ministerial representatives active in the region had been metropolitan Frenchmen, with no great prior experience of the zone. Flosse enjoyed the distinction of being both, as he put it, "du Pacifique et français",¹⁹⁰ two qualities that he claimed enabled him to represent France better than most métros. He had already established contacts with regional leaders during his time as Territorial President of French Polynesia, when he had cemented closer relations with the Cook Islands, as well as lobbying the South Pacific Forum. His Polynesian ancestry and his ability to speak Tahitian gave him an advantage over his predecessors in dealing with Polynesian countries. This acquaintance with South Pacific leaders and Polynesian culture gave Flosse an entrée into regional affairs that Debray had lacked.

According to instructions issued by Chirac (Appendix 8), Flosse was to act as a roving ambassador to the South Pacific, explaining French nuclear policy to regional leaders while endeavouring to improve France's standing with them by encouraging greater aid and cooperation. Flosse's new capacity entailed several novel features. Flosse was to be subordinate to Pons. As Secretary of State Flosse was not assigned the task of articulating French policy on the issue of New Caledonian self-determination. Despite the centrality of this "problem" in regional politics at that time, this deliberate omission was made because

Flosse's links with the RPCR put him out of contention. Unlike his ministerial colleagues, Flosse operated from Papeete rather than Paris. This was the first time that a French representative at this level had had an office in the South Pacific. As Secretary of State to the South Pacific, Flosse would be working in an area normally the domain of the Quai d'Orsay. Flosse was given authority by Chirac to conduct negotiations with South Pacific states, and to promote French scientific, technological and economic activities, with the full assistance of the Foreign Ministry. (Appendix 8)

In his instructions, Chirac showed signs of agreeing with the characterisation of the Pacific as an area destined to become increasingly important in world affairs, describing it as "un océan appelé à jouer un rôle croissant dans les années à venir". Flosse was to improve the reputation of France in this increasingly important zone, as part of what Chirac described as "l'effort important que j'entends mener pour redresser l'image de marque de la France dans le Pacifique Sud".¹⁹¹ Some of the more grandiose ideas Flosse advocated did not see the light of day, such as the regional defence pact mentioned earlier in this chapter, or the foundation of a pan-Polynesian economic, cultural and social community.¹⁹² Regardless of such unrealised plans, Flosse was a vigorous and enthusiastic representative of France in the South Pacific from March 1986 to May 1988. He travelled extensively in the region, voicing French policy and organising various aid and cooperation initiatives. From 16 April 1986 to 21 November 1987, Flosse made 33 official trips in his capacity as Secretary of State, including 18 to Paris, 15 to South Pacific island states, and six to Pacific rim nations. During this period of 20 months, he spent 247 days travelling.¹⁹³

In spite of the new ministerial appointment, the established basic elements of French South Pacific policy had not changed. The description offered by Flosse to the National Assembly on 21 October 1987 of how France should project itself in the South Pacific displayed striking similarities to Cheysson's summary of French regional policy conduct, which had been presented in the same forum in November 1981:

Nous [le gouvernement français] devons expliquer dans un dialogue que nous voulons sans exclusive la présence de la France dans le Pacifique, son utilité et même sa nécessité. [...] l'affirmation du rayonnement de la France dans le Pacifique Sud répond à un double objectif intérieur [...] Le premier est l'appartenance de ces territoires [les TOM] à la République. Elle s'appuie sur la libre détermination des peuples concernés. Il convient que nos voisins le comprennent. [...] Le deuxième est la force de défense de la France et, par là même, sa contribution à l'équilibre stratégique et au maintien de la paix dans le monde. Elles dépendent de l'existence du laboratoire d'expérimentations nucléaires qu'est Mururoa. [...]

Mais toutes les possibilités nouvelles de bénéficier de notre présence, dont nous voulons faire profiter les pays du Pacifique, ne seront d'aucun effet si nous ne parvenons pas à rétablir avec ces derniers une relation de confiance. C'est pourquoi j'ai cherché sans relâche à nouer des contacts personnels avec les dirigeants du Pacifique, que j'approche les uns après les autres dans un ordre qui tient compte de leur position vis-à-vis de notre pays.¹⁹⁴

Regardless of the departure of the Socialists from government, the concern that Cheysson, and later Debray, had stressed to sustain patient and persevering dialogue, on the double basis of democracy and the defence of French interests, persisted under Chirac.

As was the case with Pons and New Caledonian policy, the re-election of Mitterrand in May 1988 and the installation of the Rocard Government cut short activities supervised by Flosse in the South Pacific. The position of Secretary of State to the South Pacific was abandoned. The PS did not have any suitable French Pacific representative in its ranks to fill the post, even had it wished to retain this creation of Chirac. The Quai d'Orsay also influenced the

decision. The appropriateness of having an unorthodox figure with an assortment of responsibilities transcending the boundaries of established portfolios had been questioned in some quarters. Resentment existed among career diplomats working in the zone over the arrival of an itinerant political appointee in their sphere.¹⁹⁵ The aid and development initiatives negotiated by Flosse impinged on work already being done by diplomats in the region, who disliked being upstaged.

Direct control of overseeing French relations with the South Pacific was transferred by the Rocard Government to a Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific. It was announced in September 1988 that this post, of ambassadorial rank, would be attached to the DOM-TOM Ministry, an indication of the Permanent Secretary's function of coordinating increased links between the Pacific TOM and the region.¹⁹⁶ The first appointee to this post was Philippe Baude, a career diplomat who had been Ambassador to Vanuatu in 1985.¹⁹⁷ The Permanent Secretary was assigned the task of being French Ambassador to the South Pacific Commission, and became Secretary-General of the South Pacific Council.¹⁹⁸

The reactivation of the South Pacific Council by the Rocard Government was announced in September 1988, but did not hold its second meeting until May 1990. Before that date however, high-level consideration of regional policy had been far from inactive. The Rocard Government retained the conferences of ambassadors and high officials in the South Pacific that had been set up under Chirac. The fourth of these meetings, presided over by Le Pensec, was held in Nouméa from 10 to 12 February 1989. Apart from Le Pensec, in attendance from Paris were delegates of the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Research and Technology, and for Rocard. The state representatives to the Pacific TOM were also present, as well as the First Secretaries of the French Embassies at Washington and Tokyo.¹⁹⁹ The Nouméa conference reiterated the concerns of past meetings on the position of France in the region. The three key orientations of the meeting consisted of deliberations concerning how to increase regional cooperation with the Pacific TOM, how to associate the TOM more closely with the conduct of French foreign policy, and how to integrate France more fully into the region. To this end twelve aid and cooperation priorities with Pacific nations were listed, covering a range of educational, cultural, technical and scientific concerns.²⁰⁰ This announcement made by Le Pensec concerning the need to open the Pacific TOM to greater integration into their regional environment harked back to ideas circulating ten years before.

Le Pensec tied in the conference with the implementation of the Matignon Accords, highlighting the utility of increased regional cooperation for the development of New Caledonia and the other Pacific territories, and indicating that territorial leaders would be allowed to play a greater role in the expansion of regional cooperation:

*Cette approche régionale de l'ouverture des Territoires d'outre-mer ne peut réussir que si les élus participent directement. L'exercice de leurs responsabilités dans les actions de coopération régionale menées à partir des Territoires dans les domaines économique, social et culturel, permettront de rompre leur relatif isolement régional.*²⁰¹

A certain intellectual evolution had taken place here compared with four years before, when Pisani had reacted vigorously against the proposals of the Interterritorial Alliance for giving territorial leaders a greater concern in external negotiations. Both the Matignon Accords the year before the conference, and the amendments to the French Polynesian Autonomy Statute the year after it, allowed territorial representatives a greater say in territorial external relations. Further discussion in chapter 8 analyses tours made, from the time of the Rocard

Government, by territorial delegations expanding foreign contacts in numerous fields.

At Papeete on 17 May 1990, during his third presidential visit to the South Pacific since 1981, Mitterrand picked up the issue of the participation of territorial leaders in French regional integration and cooperation. In a press conference after the second meeting of the South Pacific Council, Mitterrand pointed to this participation as a major development since the first council meeting in February 1986.²⁰²

The Papeete meeting of the South Pacific Council declared the need for greater cooperation between the Pacific TOM and their neighbours and announced the extension of courses at the French University of the Pacific as a step towards encouraging links. Inter-university exchanges and greater research would be encouraged through the extension of tertiary facilities. Environmental concerns were also discussed. An observatory for the surveillance of the environment was to be created, and it was announced that France would work to fulfil the protection of the environment under various existing conventions.²⁰³ In other words Paris was to keep its promises on existing environmental commitments. These two points and the extension of university courses were significant if conventional declarations. Of greater interest were the final two measures announced in the council communiqué under the rubric "Protection des hommes et des ressources". Reserves of materials for disaster relief were to be set up in the Pacific TOM for use either there or in neighbouring states. In addition, it was announced that France was prepared to offer surveillance of foreign EEZs to those states which requested it.²⁰⁴ These were genuinely new initiatives which were to be of considerable importance in furthering regional relations in the 1990s, as is outlined in greater detail in chapter 8.

Overall, the second meeting of the South Pacific Council had the aura of a showpiece. It was organised as part of the presidential tour of French Polynesia during the centenary celebrations of the commune of Papeete. The initiatives it announced could have been made in Paris at less expense and with less flourish, and its introductory proposal to increase the part that territorial representatives were to play in regional policy was recycled from the conference of ambassadors and high officials that had been held in Nouméa the year before. Since its foundation the Council has not been very vigorous. Its inactivity under the Chirac Government was through no fault of its own, but the Papeete meeting was the sole instance of a council gathering during the first five years of Mitterrand's second septennate. The policy role of the South Pacific Council has mainly consisted of rehashing messages on French regional integration which had already been presented elsewhere, and making announcements about the implementation of a small number of projects of modest prestige out of proportion with the rank and number of the members of the Council. The willingness of Mitterrand to increase French participation in regional affairs should not be doubted. The high rank of the Council's members indicated the degree of importance attached by the President to the South Pacific. It is less certain that the regional integration of three territories with fewer than 500,000 French citizens between them merited a superintendant body as elevated as the South Pacific Council.

Although not disposed to meet the jetset pace of Flosse during his time as Secretary of State to the South Pacific, representatives of the Socialist Governments from 1988 to 1993 maintained France's profile in the region. Prime Minister Rocard himself played a particularly important role. The pressing demands of the New Caledonian portfolio made him immediately aware of the South Pacific to a greater extent than any preceding Prime Minister under the Fifth Republic, and he extended that awareness to foreign relations in the zone, being the first French Prime Minister to visit Australia and Fiji, in August 1989, and New Zealand, in April 1991. This activity, as he himself pointed out,

underlined the regard with which Paris held the region, and was a sign of willingness in Paris to improve contacts and bridge differences.²⁰⁵

The two tours made by Rocard fulfilled comprehensively the criteria concerning the conduct of French South Pacific policy as laid down by Cheysson in November 1981. Rocard made patient efforts to explain French nuclear policy to the sceptical Australian and New Zealand press corps, and was able to present a positive summary of recent developments in New Caledonia under the Matignon Accords.²⁰⁶ While in Christchurch on 30 April 1991 he met New Zealand environmentalists to discuss French policy on the Antarctic, and drift net fishing.²⁰⁷ Emulating those French representatives who had gone before him, in 1989 and 1991 Rocard unambiguously informed his hosts in Canberra, Wellington and Suva that France reserved the right to conduct policy as it saw fit in the Pacific TOM. In the case of his New Zealand tour, the opening of another series of nuclear tests at Moruroa six days after his departure from Christchurch on 1 May 1991 drove that message home.²⁰⁸

Compared to earlier decades, French diplomatic activity since the late 1970s has shown signs of greater attention being paid in Paris to foreign relations in the South Pacific. The three embassies established in 1980 provided a diplomatic network that reinforced the cross-accreditation in the 1970s of the French Ambassador in Wellington to island states. During the 1980s the French Ambassador in Suva took charge from his counterpart in Wellington of relations with Tonga, Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati. (Table 53) While French diplomatic relations with Polynesian island states generally fared well, links with Melanesian nations were beset with troubles. As will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 8, two French Ambassadors to Vanuatu were expelled in the 1980s, and the Solomon Islands declined cross-accreditation of the French Ambassador in Port Vila. In Papua New Guinea the French Embassy survived the minor tribulations of periodic anti-nuclear and anti-colonialist protests by local unions, only to be struck in March 1991 by the announcement of its impending closure by the Quai d'Orsay as part of budgetary cutbacks. After the reduction of the embassy staff to two by April 1992 (one diplomat and a security guard), it was decided in Paris to retain the post after all.²⁰⁹ The decision to close the Port Moresby Embassy had been described in July 1991 by Alain Vivien, then Secretary of State to Foreign Affairs, as a major mistake that would set back French regional diplomacy.²¹⁰ In the end, Vivien's position prevailed over budgetary considerations. In spite of the efforts of successive French Governments to improve relations with the South Pacific, progress during the 1980s was uneven and interspersed with diplomatic setbacks in the cases of the Melanesian states.

Above ambassadorial level, changing approaches to the region were implemented. Various bodies established to consider Pacific policy changed name and form due to the differing influences of metropolitan French political parties. The decision to form the South Pacific Council in 1985 was a response to the high profile that regional issues had assumed that year. From 1986 to 1988 such measures as the appointment of Flosse, the conferences of senior officials, and the creation of the Interministerial Committee devoted to the South Pacific, similarly responded to the prominence of regional issues, and marked an attempt by the Chirac Government to distinguish its initiatives from those of the Socialists. After the end of cohabitation the reactivation of the South Pacific Council, and the creation of the post of Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, were in turn motivated by the desire of the Rocard Government to distance itself from the activities of the Chirac Government.

From 1988 to 1993 continuity in structures existed but, relieved of major controversy comparable to that of 1985, for Paris the South Pacific in general was no longer as pressing a dossier as it had been. That the South Pacific Council only met once during this period of Socialist Government is revelatory in this respect. French geostrategic rhetoric about the Pacific being the new

**Table 53. France's South Pacific Diplomatic
Network
1993**

Country	French Representation	Accreditation
Australia	Embassy, Canberra Consulate, Melbourne Consulate, Sydney	
Cook Islands	Honorary Consul, Avarua	
Fiji	Embassy, Suva	Tonga, Tuvalu Nauru, Kiribati
New Zealand	Embassy, Wellington	Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Western Samoa
PNG	Embassy	
Tonga	Honorary Consul, Nuku'alofa	
Vanuatu	Embassy, Port Vila	Solomon Islands
Western Samoa	Honorary Consul, Apia	

Sources: Steve Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.193; Richard Sola: "Le Royaume de Tonga, un état neutre du Pacifique" in *L'Afrique et l'Asie modernes* no.166 automne 1990 p.14; N. & N. Douglas (eds.): *Pacific Islands Yearbook* (16th edition) *passim*; *Matangi Tonga* May-June 1991 p.18; *Nauru Bulletin* 22 August 1990; *The Press* 1 June 1991; Isabelle Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.204.

centre of the world, and about the necessity for France to bolster its interests there, had lost its asserted urgency by the early 1990s. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed whatever military threat there might have been. And on the political level, the suspension of its nuclear testing and the implementation of the Matignon Accords rendered France a more welcome partner in regional affairs than it had been. In the absence of further sources of tension, France will be free to pursue its target of regional integration into the twenty-first century, although this evolution will be dependent on socio-economic and political stability in the Pacific TOM.

Notes

- ¹ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 novembre 1981 p.3450.
- ² *Le Monde* 2 septembre 1986; *The Press* 2 September 1986.
- ³ For a chronology of events related in this chapter, see Appendix 6.
- ⁴ "Discours de M. J. Chirac, Nouméa, le 25 septembre 1985" pp.12-13. (Photocopied speech notes.)
- ⁵ See for example Guillebaud: *Les confettis de l'Empire*; de Baleine: *Les danseuses de la France*.
- ⁶ *Le Monde* 2 janvier 1981.
- ⁷ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 juillet 1986 p.2930.
- ⁸ *La lettre de la nation* 4 décembre 1987.
- ⁹ *Le Monde* 28 février-1er mars 1993.
- ¹⁰ *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 23 novembre 1987 p.6308.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* 11 juin 1980 p.1663.
- ¹² Jean Chesneaux: "The Function of the Pacific in the French Fifth Republic's 'Grand Design'. Theory and Practice of the 'Puissance Mondiale Moyenne'" in *The Journal of Pacific History* vol.26 no.2 1991 pp.256-258.
- ¹³ Premier Ministre: Service d'Information et de Diffusion: *Les Départements et Territoires d'Outre-mer. 7 ans de développement économique et social 1974-1981* p.6.
- ¹⁴ The South Pacific Commission is the oldest multilateral aid agency in the South Pacific. It was founded in 1947 by Australia, the United States, France, New Zealand, the Netherlands and Britain. See South Pacific Commission: *Commission du Pacifique Sud: historique, buts et activités*. In the 1980s France was the fourth largest financial contributor to the Commission, after Australia, the United States and New Zealand. Christine Moign: *La France et la Commission du Pacifique Sud de 1947 à nos jours* p.70.
- ¹⁵ At a meeting of the South Pacific Commission held in Nouméa from 25 to 27 October 1993, the British representative announced Britain's intention of withdrawing from the organisation by 1995. *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1993 p.18.
- ¹⁶ Chesneaux & Maclellan: *La France dans le Pacifique* p.220.
- ¹⁷ Le Pensec: "Les DOM-TOM dans leur environnement régional" p.10.
- ¹⁸ See note 1.
- ¹⁹ Largely but not totally. For example in 1993 the compensation claims pursued by the Australian Government for the effects of British nuclear testing in the 1950s continued. In December that year, the British Government agreed to recompense Australia for the human and environmental damage caused by British nuclear testing. The legacy of British annexation as it affected Aboriginal land rights had become the subject of major debate following a High Court ruling that Aborigines, as the original inhabitants of the continent, might claim a prior right to public land.
- ²⁰ Martin Verlet: "Territoires d'outre-mer à l'heure du changement démocratique" in *Cahiers du communisme* vol.53 no.9 1977 p.91.
- ²¹ Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.21.
- ²² Moutoussamy: *Les DOM-TOM: enjeu géopolitique, économique et stratégique* p.97.
- ²³ Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.21.
- ²⁴ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 29 avril 1985 p.1944.
- ²⁵ *Le Monde* 7 janvier 1988, 9 janvier 1988.
- ²⁶ Aldrich & Connell: *France's Overseas Frontier* p.275.
- ²⁷ See, for example the French agreements with Tuvalu and the Cook Islands: "Décret no.86-1056 du 22 septembre 1986 portant publication de l'accord sous forme d'échange de notes en date des 6 août et 5 novembre 1985 entre le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement des îles Tuvalu relatif à la délimitation des frontières maritimes entre la France et les îles Tuvalu" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 26 septembre 1986 p.11509; "Décret no.90-965 du 23 octobre 1990 portant publication de l'accord sous forme d'échange de notes entre le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement des îles Cook [...] signée à Rarotonga le 3 août 1990" in Ministère des affaires étrangères: *Recueil des traités et accords de la France 1990* p.97.
- ²⁸ *Voice of Vanuatu* 18 March 1983.
- ²⁹ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juillet 1983 p.3053.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* 30 mai 1983 p.2415.
- ³¹ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 23 mars 1983.

- 32 Ibid. 31 mars 1983; *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 6 juin 1983 p.2494.
- 33 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 12 janvier 1987, 4 août 1989, 5 août 1989.
- 34 *Le Monde* 28 février-1er mars 1993.
- 35 Original bold. *La lettre de la nation* 4 décembre 1987.
- 36 Chesneaux: "The Function of the Pacific in the French Fifth Republic's 'Grand Design'" p.259.
- 37 "Quant à l'accès à l'espace, il implique des installations au sol pour les lanceurs, l'ajustement et la tenue des orbites. Celles-ci, en raison des lois de la physique, doivent être réparties sur la surface du globe. Nos départements et territoires d'outre-mer nous offrent à cet égard les bases dont nous avons besoin." François Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.23.
- 38 Bruno Barrillot (ed.): *Guide des forces nucléaires françaises*. Les cahiers de *Damoclès* no.10 janvier 1992 p.49.
- 39 *Islands Business* November 1986 p.24.
- 40 Henri Fagès: "Un intérêt majeur de la France en Océanie: le Centre d'Expérimentation Nucléaire du Pacifique" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 87 année 1988 no.2 p.15.
- 41 Jean-Christophe Victor: "France in the Pacific" in *The Pacific Review* vol.3 no.4 1990 p.347.
- 42 David Yost: "French Nuclear Targeting" in D. Ball & J. Richelson (eds.): *Strategic Nuclear Targeting* pp.127-156.
- 43 Land-based nuclear weapons such as the 18 S3 medium range missiles, housed in silos on the Plateau d'Albion in Haute Provence, had a maximum range of just over 3,000km. Vehicle-launched "prestrategic" or tactical nuclear arms such as the Pluton and Hadès missiles, in service during the 1980s and 1990s, had maximum ranges of 120km and 480km respectively. The French aerial tactical nuclear force, which in 1992 consisted of three squadrons of Mirage 2000 bombers, was largely limited to operations in Europe, although with aerial refuelling its operational range could be extended. Barrillot (ed.): *Guide des forces nucléaires françaises* pp.20, 25-26, 41.
- 44 Ibid. pp.14-16.
- 45 The *Rubis* was the first French submarine to berth at Nouméa. *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 11 mai 1985.
- 46 "L'intérêt stratégique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie tient essentiellement à sa position géographique dans le Pacifique Sud qui permet de contrôler les voies des passages du Pacifique vers l'océan Indien pour la mer de Tasman." *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 22 avril 1985 p.1774.
- 47 See for example the warning offered by Charles Zorgbibe: "Présence française dans le Pacifique Sud" in ARLR: *La Nouvelle Calédonie: la stratégie, le droit et la République* p.180.
- 48 Jean-Marie Colombani, a journalist for *Le Monde* born in New Caledonia, perceptively observed: "Malheureuse Calédonie! Après avoir souffert d'être ignorée, isolée, tenue pour quantité négligeable, la voilà qui devient l'enjeu stratégique et politique du moment. Dans les deux cas, elle est naturellement vue à travers le prisme déformant des impératifs tactiques des uns et des autres." Jean-Marie Colombani: *L'utopie calédonienne* p.137.
- 49 *Le Monde* 11 mai 1985; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 11 mai 1985.
- 50 "Décret du 11 septembre 1985 autorisant et déclarant d'utilité publique et urgents les travaux d'aménagement de la base stratégique de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et des dépendances" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 12 septembre 1985 p.10505.
- 51 "Assurément, la présence de la France dans cette zone du Pacifique gêne beaucoup de monde. J'ai pourtant l'intention de l'accroître, notamment par la création d'une base militaire à Nouméa qui offrira - ce n'est pas le cas aujourd'hui - des mouillages pour nos sous-marins, des quais d'envol pour nos avions supersoniques. Tournée vers le grand large, elle constituera l'un des supports de notre stratégie." Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.31.
- 52 For critical analysis of this thesis, see H. Coutau-Bégarie & J.-L. Seurin: *Nouvelle-Calédonie: les antipodes de la démocratie* ch.6; Jean-Paul Gomane: "Perspectives de la France outre-mer" in *Politique étrangère* no.50 1985 p.424.
- 53 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 30 mars 1983.
- 54 *Le Monde* 14 septembre 1985.
- 55 Ibid. 4 mars 1987.

- 56 Mitterrand described the base in terms of a response to the local political situation: "Dans la trilogie droits Canaques, droits des Européens d'origine, droits de la France qui inspire la loi sur le statut de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, elle [la base] garantira les droits de la France." Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.31.
- 57 Barrillot (ed.): *Guide des forces nucléaires françaises* p.49.
- 58 For accounts of the history of these efforts, see Jean Toulat: *Objectif Mururoa*; Barry Mitcalfe et al.: Boy Roel. *Voyage to Nowhere*; Elsa Caron (ed.): *Fri Alert*; David McTaggart: *Greenpeace III. Journey into the Bomb*; Xavier Luccioni: *L'affaire Greenpeace: une guerre des médias*; Michael Szabo: *Making Waves: the Greenpeace New Zealand Story*.
- 59 *Le Monde* 2 juillet 1986.
- 60 *Damoclès* no.32 avril-mai 1988 p.7.
- 61 *Libération* 24-25 novembre 1984.
- 62 Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the South Pacific" p.7.
- 63 *Damoclès* no.32 avril-mai 1988 p.7.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 9 octobre 1993.
- 66 *Pacific Defence Reporter* March 1986 pp.12-13.
- 67 Jean Houbert: "France in the Indian Ocean: decolonizing without disengaging" in *The Round Table* no.298 1986 p.153.
- 68 Jean Guiart: "Stratégies imaginaires et stratégies réelles dans le Pacifique Sud" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 87 année 1988 no.2 p.31.
- 69 Pierre Thireaut: "Western Strategies: a positive response". Paper presented at the Institute of Public Affairs conference *Soviet Ambitions in the Pacific* Canberra 21 March 1988 p.7.
- 70 Thireaut gave the example of Prime Minister Ezekiel Alebua inviting him and a ship to attend the tenth anniversary celebrations of the independence of the Solomon Islands in 1988. Ibid.
- 71 Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the South Pacific" p.3.
- 72 *Cook Islands News* 8 August 1984, 9 August 1984, 7 August 1985, 6 August 1988.
- 73 Ibid. 5 May 1984, 7 August 1985, 27 November 1987, 9 February 1988, 7 April 1990, 12 October 1990, 22 December 1990.
- 74 Thireaut: "Western Strategies: a positive response" p.7.
- 75 See for example *Le Monde* 2 janvier 1987; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 6 janvier 1987, 21 janvier 1987.
- 76 *Cook Islands News* 8 January 1987, 9 January 1987, 12 January 1987.
- 77 *Solomon Nius* 30 October 1986.
- 78 Analysis of the extension of French military cooperation from the late 1980s to the 1990s is discussed in depth in the context of French regional aid and cooperation in chapter 8.
- 79 There were of course some contacts. French warships regularly toured the region, making courtesy calls to foreign ports, and the French Pacific Commander-in-Chief kept in touch with his US and Australian counterparts. Nic Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the Pacific" in *Interdisciplinary Peace Research* vol.2 no.1 p.7.
- 80 Jean Chesneaux: "France in the Pacific: global approach or respect for regional agendas?" in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* vol.18 no.2 April-June 1986 p.76.
- 81 Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.26.
- 82 Georges Zeldine: *L'hémisphère Pacifique: réalités et avenir* p.4.
- 83 The helicopter carrier *Jeanne d'Arc*, which makes an annual tour of the Pacific Ocean, has exercised with US Navy warships, including the aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz*, the cruiser *USS California* and the attack submarine *USS Queenfish*. The *Jeanne d'Arc* however, is not stationed in the South Pacific. Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity? French Military Forces in the South Pacific" p.14.
- 84 Thireaut: "Western Strategies: a positive response" p.7.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 *Le Point* 18 mars 1991.
- 87 Jolyon Howorth: "France and the Gulf War: from pre-war crisis to post-war crisis" in *Modern and Contemporary France* no.46 July 1991 pp.10-12.
- 88 In February 1985, at the time of debate over the future of New Caledonia, Vice-Admiral Paul de Cazanove, former commander of the French Atlantic fleet, sounded the alarm against an imminent Red peril: "Les français savent-ils que l'URSS, qui s'est assurée une présence considérable dans le Pacifique nord depuis Kamchatka jusqu'au Vietnam, où la base de

Cam-Ranh abrite bâtiments, avions et missiles soviétiques, attend avec impatience de s'implanter enfin dans le Pacifique sud? Allons-nous leur offrir la Nouvelle-Calédonie, relativement proche de la Polynésie, où se trouve, à Moruroa, le «laboratoire» de notre force nucléaire stratégique, gage de notre indépendance? [...] Nos amis australiens, qui ont joué aux apprentis sorciers en militant plus ou moins ouvertement contre notre présence là-bas, se rendent compte maintenant de la déstabilisation que créerait notre départ. Le risque serait grand alors de voir se développer, non loin d'eux, une nouvelle base aux mains d'un empire qui allie la force des armes et la puissance de l'idéologie, avec comme objectif la domination du monde." *Le Monde* 28 février 1985.

Although somewhat less alarmist than de Cazanove, Vice-Admiral Pierre Thireaut, Commander-in-Chief of the French Pacific forces, stated in March 1988: "I think that the geographical position of our [Pacific] Territories is very important for the stability of the Western world. Imagine the consequences if our enemies took over these positions!" Thireaut: "Western Strategies: a positive response" p.7.

⁸⁹ For a detailed French analysis of this scenario, outlining Soviet naval inferiority to the US fleet, see Hervé Coutau-Bégarie: *Géostratégie du Pacifique* p.114.

⁹⁰ See Ross Babbage: "Soviet Strategic Dilemmas in the North Pacific in the 1990s" in R. Babbage (ed.): *The Soviets in the Pacific in the 1990s* p.76.

⁹¹ Coutau-Bégarie: *Géostratégie du Pacifique* pp.81-82.

⁹² Ibid. p.130.

⁹³ Ibid. p.131.

⁹⁴ JO. *Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 3 janvier 1983 p.56.

⁹⁵ Pierre Lacour: *De l'Océanie au Pacifique: histoire et enjeux* pp.110-112.

⁹⁶ Ibid. p.112.

⁹⁷ Gaston Flosse: "Sécurité du Pacifique Sud, sécurité de la France" in *Défense nationale* mars 1988 p.14.

⁹⁸ Ibid. pp.9-10, 12. Cf. the comments by the prominent French commentator Jean-François Revel: "Pacifique Sud: le quadrillage soviétique" in *Le Point* 2 novembre 1987.

⁹⁹ Jacques Baumel: "La France et les enjeux du Pacifique" in *Revue des deux mondes* no.25 1984 p.53.

¹⁰⁰ Gaston Flosse: "La désinformation antifranaise dans le Pacifique Sud" in *Revue politique et parlementaire* no.933 janvier/février 1988 p.67.

¹⁰¹ For fuller consideration of this point see R. Kiste & R. Herr: "The Soviet Penetration of the South Pacific Islands: an assessment" in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* vol.18 no.2 April-June 1982 pp.42-59.

¹⁰² Hervé Coutau-Bégarie: *Géostratégie du Pacifique* p.130.

¹⁰³ In 1976 Tonga and Western Samoa rejected requests from Moscow to allow Soviet fishing vessels to make port calls. Negotiations with Kiribati in 1985 and with Fiji in 1986 collapsed. Lack of commercially viable catches led to the Soviets abandoning their fishing in Kiribatian waters in September 1986, while in the same month the Fijian fishing accord negotiations ended due to irreconcilable differences. Discussions with Vanuatu were more successful, with Port Vila granting Soviet trawlers and Aeroflot supply jets landing rights three months later. However this agreement lapsed in 1987 and has not been renewed. Ibid.; Steve Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.49.

¹⁰⁴ Leszek Buszynski: "Russia and the Asia-Pacific Region" in *Pacific Affairs* vol.64 no.4 winter 1992-1993 p.486.

¹⁰⁵ Institut du Pacifique: *Le Pacifique nouveau centre du monde* pp.42-43.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p.42.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p.43.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p.217.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. p.241.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. pp.230, 249-253.

¹¹¹ "Il s'agit pour la France d'une continuité historique faite, à la fois, d'une fidélité à un passé que nous ne saurions renier, et une adaptation au futur. Notre éviction de la zone du Pacifique équivaldrait à une marginalisation annonciatrice d'un déclin irrémédiable." Ibid. p.43.

¹¹² Georges Lemoine: "La Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *Mondes et Cultures* tome 44 no.1 1984 p.18.

¹¹³ In G. Etrillard & F. Sureau: *A l'est du monde* pp.11-22.

- 114 Mitterrand made reference to "la vision des masses humaines dont le poids déplace au bord du Pacifique les centres traditionnels de la puissance": *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.13.
- 115 "Le Pacifique est devenu une région essentielle du monde d'aujourd'hui. C'est l'Océan de l'avenir. Une méditerranée aux dimensions planétaires." RPR: *Le RPR vous parle de la Nouvelle-Calédonie* cited in Robert Aldrich: "Rediscovering the Pacific: a critique of French geopolitical analysis" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 87 année 1988 no.2 p.57.
- 116 Rocard has made positive reference to the Pacific as "une région économique en pleine expansion [...] où la France est elle-même présente": *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* p.5.
- 117 Institut du Pacifique: *Le Pacifique nouveau centre du monde* p.10.
- 118 Yves Lacoste: "Le Pacifique: est-il vraiment le «nouveau centre du monde»" in *Les nouvelles littéraires* décembre 1984 p.172.
- 119 Ibid.
- 120 Ibid.
- 121 Chesneaux & Maclellan: *La France dans le Pacifique* p.106.
- 122 Letter to the author from Nathalie Le Brun, Trade Delegate at the French Embassy, Port Moresby, 29 November 1993; letter to the author from Pierre Chouard, Head of the Economic Expansion Post, French Embassy, Suva, 22 December 1993.
- 123 Letter to the author from Nathalie Le Brun, Trade Delegate at the French Embassy, Port Moresby, 29 November 1993.
- 124 Letter to the author from Pierre Chouard, Head of the Economic Expansion Post, French Embassy, Suva, 22 December 1993.
- 125 Ibid.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Ibid.
- 128 Aldrich: "Rediscovering the Pacific: a critique of French geopolitical analysis" p.65.
- 129 Etrillard & Sureau: *A l'est du monde* p.140.
- 130 Paul de Deckker: "La France, l'Océanie: une longue histoire" in P. de Deckker & P.-Y. Toullelan (eds.): *La France et le Pacifique* pp.5-6.
- 131 Zeldine: *L'hémisphère Pacifique. Réalités et avenir* p.4.
- 132 Isabelle Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* pp.203, 304.
- 133 Charles-Henri Montin: "France's Role in the Pacific" in *New Zealand International Review* vol.10 no.5 September/October 1985 p.20.
- 134 Jean-Pierre Gomane: "France and the Pacific: an impressionist policy" in *The Pacific Review* vol.2 no.4 1989 p.334.
- 135 Aldrich: "Rediscovering the Pacific: a critique of French geopolitical analysis" p.57.
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- 137 For a 1990s example see Frank Gibney: *The Pacific Century: America and Asia in a changing world*.
- 138 See Jean Guiart: "Réalité du pouvoir en Nouvelle-Calédonie et au Vanuatu" in P. de Deckker & P. Lagayette (eds.): *Etats et pouvoirs dans les territoires français du Pacifique: Nouvelle-Calédonie, Polynésie française, Vanuatu, Wallis et Futuna* pp.120-121.
- 139 *Los Angeles Times* 5 April 1993.
- 140 Walden Bello: "Trouble in Paradise. The Tension of Economic Integration in the Asia-Pacific" in *World Policy Journal* vol.10 no.2 Summer 1993 pp.33-39.
- 141 Aldrich: "Rediscovering the Pacific: a critique of French geopolitical analysis" p.68.
- 142 Deschanel was President for eight months, from February to September 1920.
- 143 Aldrich: *The French Presence in the South Pacific 1842-1940* ch.8.
- 143 Montin: "France's Role in the Pacific" p.20.
- 144 "L'actuel président de la République française et les membres de son gouvernement, après avoir concentré leur attention immédiatement après mai 1981, principalement sur l'Afrique, le Moyen-Orient et l'Amérique latine, ont, depuis la fin de l'année 1981, manifestement «redécouverte» l'Asie du Sud-Est, l'Extrême-Orient et le Pacifique [...]" Institut du Pacifique: *Pacifique, nouveau centre du monde* pp.217-218.
- 145 Dijoud: *Un plan de développement* pp.49-54.
- 146 See Moign: *La France et la Commission du Pacifique Sud de 1947 à nos jours, passim*.
- 147 Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.94.

- 148 Anon.: "La France et le Pacifique Sud" in *Regards sur l'actualité* no.59 mars 1980 p.39.
- 149 Danielsson & Danielsson: *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale* p.445.
- 150 *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 23 April 1975.
- 151 Ibid. 4 February 1976.
- 152 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.204.
- 153 Ibid.
- 154 *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier* 14 September 1979.
- 155 Ibid. 13 November 1980.
- 156 See the comments to this effect made by Dijoud as Secretary of State to Foreign Affairs in *La politique étrangère de la France* no.40 mars-avril 1981 pp.18-19.
- 157 *Fiji Times* 1 July 1980; *Fiji Sun* 5 July 1980.
- 158 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 1. Les ruptures* pp.220-232.
- 159 See Mitterrand: *Politique* 2 pp.312-313.
- 160 Ibid. pp.314-315, 324.
- 161 See Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 1* pp.226-233
- 162 Those who attended included Cheysson, Hernu, Emmanuelli, the Minister of Research and Technology, the Minister of Cooperation and Development, the Minister of the Sea, the Minister of Energy, the Minister of Culture, two delegates from the Elysée (Jacques Attali and Hubert Védrine) the Ambassadors to the United States, Japan, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Canada, the Phillippines, Indonesia, North Korea, South Korea, Fiji and Australia, the Consuls to Hong Kong, Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as the High Commissioners of New Caledonia and of French Polynesia. *Le Monde* 7 mai 1982.
- 163 "France-Pacifique" 4-8 mai 1982 in BIPA white file 821156300.
- 164 The most famous of which is *Revolution in the Revolution?*
- 165 *Le Monde* 24 juin 1983: Paul de Deckker: "The Perception of France in the Pacific Islands" in Aldrich (ed.): *France, Oceania and Australia: past and present* pp.185-186.
- 166 John Wheeldon: "New Caledonia" in *Quadrant* August 1983 pp.7-8.
- 167 Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* p.313.
- 168 "Interview with Whitlam" in *Labor Forum* June 1984 pp.25-27.
- 169 *Libération* 14 février 1986.
- 170 Ibid.
- 171 Ralph Premdas: "Melanesian Socialism: Vanuatu's quest for self-definition" in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Studies* vol.25 no.2 July 1987 pp.144-145.
- 172 *Libération* 14 février 1986.
- 173 Ibid.
- 174 See *Le Monde* 19 juin 1981, 11 août 1982; *The Star* 18 June 1981; *The Press* 11 May 1983.
- 175 These were not Mitterrand's first visits to the South Pacific. As leader of the PS he had toured French Polynesia in April 1975.
- 176 *The Star* 14 September 1985.
- 177 *Le Monde* 15-16 septembre 1985, 17 septembre 1985.
- 178 Ibid. 17 septembre 1985.
- 179 Ibid.
- 180 Ibid.
- 181 "Communiqué du Conseil des ministres 23 décembre 1985" in BIPA green file 003 170 856030700.
- 182 *Libération* 14 février 1986.
- 183 "Communiqué du ministère des relations extérieures diffusé à l'issue du Conseil du Pacifique Sud 26 février 1986" in BIPA green file 001 388-389 862005500.
- 184 De Deckker: "The Perception of France in the Pacific Islands" p.186.
- 185 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* pp.619-626.
- 186 See *Le Quotidien de Paris* 8 avril 1987; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 octobre 1987.
- 187 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 16 mai 1987, 5 mars 1988.
- 188 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* pp.540-562.
- 189 Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.93.
- 190 *Le Monde* 23-24 novembre 1986.
- 191 Chirac in *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 10 février 1987.

- 192 *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 27 juillet 1987.
- 193 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.339.
- 194 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 22 octobre 1987 p.4573.
- 195 Conversations with Patrick Schlouch, former press secretary to Flosse, Christchurch 13 April 1992, and with Paul de Deckker, former advisor to Flosse, Adelaide 7 July 1992.
- 196 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 19 septembre 1988.
- 197 *Vanuatu Weekly* 20 July 1985.
- 198 Moign: *La France et la Commission du Pacifique Sud de 1947 à nos jours* p.64; Axel Queval: "Asie/Pacifique" in Pascal. Boniface (ed.): *L'année stratégique 1990* p.187.
- 199 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 9 février 1989.
- 200 *Ibid.* 13 février 1989.
- 201 *Ibid.*
- 202 Mitterrand: *Visite officielle...* p.42. The Council's communiqué also noted this point. "Le Conseil a examiné les moyens que la France entend mettre, dans les domaines de la formation, de la recherche et de la protection du milieu des hommes, au service de sa politique de coopération et de dialogue avec les pays du Pacifique Sud comme avec les puissances présentes dans la zone, et de participation active des Territoires, selon les voies propres à chacun d'eux à l'action ainsi conduite. [...] Il a pris note de l'évolution observée dans ce sens au cours des deux années écoulées, illustrée notamment par la capacité qu'ont eue les représentants élus des collectivités des Territoires, comme leurs statuts d'autonomie leur en offrent la possibilité, de participer à des négociations régionales et de signer des accords internationaux au nom de la République." "Conseil du Pacifique Sud. Papeete, jeudi 17 mai 1990. Communiqué" in *ibid.* p.31.
- 203 *Ibid.* p.33.
- 204 *Ibid.*
- 205 See "Allocution devant les parlementaires australiens (Canberra, 18 août 1989)" in Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* pp.11-14, "Suva, 23 août 1989. "Une coopération poursuivie à un rythme plus soutenu"" in *ibid.* pp.43-45; "Déjeuner offert par M. Bolger Premier ministre de Nouvelle-Zélande (29 avril 1991). Toast de M. Michel Rocard Premier ministre". (Photocopied speech notes provided by the French Embassy in Wellington.)
- 206 See "Press Conference given by the French Prime Minister. Canberra, 18 August 1989. Unofficial Transcript of Questions and Answers"; "Transcription non officielle de la conférence de presse du Premier ministre Michel Rocard à Sydney le 19 août" (photocopies supplied by the French Embassy in Canberra); "Allocution devant le National Press Club (Canberra, 18 août 1989)" in Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* pp.5-10; interview with Paul Holmes on Television One New Zealand 30 April 1991.
- 207 *Evening Post* 1 May 1991.
- 208 *Ibid.* 4 May 1991; *New Zealand Herald* 2 May 1991.
- 209 Letter to the author from Nathalie Le Brun, Commercial Delegate at the French Embassy in Port Moresby, 29 November 1993.
- 210 *Le Monde* 25 juillet 1991.

6. Nuclear Issues

Le problème que suscitent nos essais nucléaires demeure. La France peut comprendre les sentiments que ceux-ci suscitent dans certains autres pays de la région. Mais elle souhaite d'abord que sa politique de défense soit connue et comprise. La France n'a pas d'autre choix dans la situation présente, pour garantir sa sécurité, que de conserver un instrument de dissuasion dont la crédibilité ne peut être assurée qu'en y incorporant tous les progrès techniques nécessaires. N'oubliez pas que la dissuasion nucléaire n'est pas étrangère à la paix que le monde connaît depuis plus de quarante ans. Enfin, vous savez que toutes les précautions sont prises et toutes les vérifications sont faites de telle sorte qu'il n'en découle aucun dommage pour l'environnement naturel et les populations.

Prime Minister Rocard, addressing the Australian National Press Club, Canberra, 18 August 1989.¹

A Long-Standing Problem

In the 1980s, French nuclear testing held the distinction of being the longest-established divisive issue between Paris and the nations of the South Pacific. Numerous claims and counterclaims were issued concerning testing. (Appendix 9) Rocard, speaking in front of an audience that had traditionally not been very sympathetic to French testing, articulated a position which had been uttered by French Presidents and their Ministers since the time in office of de Gaulle. Superpower nuclear rivalry constrained France to keep a nuclear force for its defence, and nuclear testing formed an integral part of modernising that force. Nuclear deterrence was portrayed as an effective peace keeper, as it was claimed the devastation it would wreak had prevented global war for forty years. Any fears the inhabitants might have held over the dangers of environmental damage caused by the tests were groundless because of French precautions against any such risk.

Regional governments and non-governmental pressure groups rejected this position. For example the Australian Labor Government, while retaining close ties with the US nuclear defence system in the 1980s, did not see any need for an independent French deterrent to maintain global peace. Three decades after Australia had itself played host to British nuclear tests, the Hawke Government rejected French testing on the grounds that radiation did not respect national boundaries, and that insufficient data existed to confirm French assurances that testing was harmless. Under these circumstances, it was asserted in Canberra that South Pacific states had a legitimate interest in objecting to French activities. As Rocard declared, France recognised these concerns, but national defence policy was a greater priority in Paris.

The French case for nuclear testing and the regional anti-nuclear arguments against French activities had been argued in mainly circular, repetitive fashion since the establishment of the CEP in French Polynesia in 1963. The suspension of French testing announced in April 1992 brought about the abatement of this dispute without resolving it. The Bérégovoy Government did not halt testing through any admission of major safety deficiencies. Nor had those opposed to French testing conclusively proved any such deficiencies. Neither party has renounced its position, both preferring to allow the matter to rest in the possibly provisional absence of further tests to provoke differences.

This chapter is devoted to examining nuclear issues as they affected French South Pacific policy since 1981. Particular attention is paid to consideration of French statements on national nuclear policy, as past surveys in

English have tended to dwell on a non-French South Pacific perspective. In these surveys, analysis has been made of the political stances of regional states to a greater extent than that of France.² Here, French efforts to articulate nuclear policy to the region are discussed, and the effectiveness of the arguments offered in defence of testing are critically examined. The French position has, to 1993, prevailed over the anti-nuclear stances of various South Pacific micro-states, whose opposition to French testing had been as ineffectual as that of New Zealand and Australia. France has reserved the right to conduct its domestic policies as it saw fit, independent of any regional protest over them. The prime example of this will has been the French development of a nuclear deterrent through the means of testing facilities in French Polynesia.

The strategic justification for French testing and the role the CEP plays in French defence are examined first. There follows a presentation of French claims concerning the safety of underground nuclear explosions at Moruroa and Fangataufa. These claims are examined with reference to the scientific evidence that is available to support or disprove them as the case may be. The extent, and on occasion the extremes, to which France has gone to defend its testing in the face of criticism are outlined. This outline culminates in an overview of the motives for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, its implications for French party politics, and its effect on French relations in the zone. One major international response to French testing in the 1980s, the Rarotonga Treaty, was spurred on by the bombing. The French attitude to the creation by the Treaty of a South Pacific nuclear free zone is presented, before the chapter is concluded with assessment of the reasons for, and the response to, the French suspension of testing in April 1992.

The Gaullist Legacy: Mitterrand and the Bomb

When, on 29 May 1981, Hernu announced a halt to French nuclear testing, premature hopes were aroused in the South Pacific that France might be contemplating the end of its testing operations at Moruroa. Prime Minister Muldoon said that at first he thought the suspension might have been in recognition of regional complaints about testing, although this turned out not to be the case.³ On 17 June, at his first presidential meeting with a head of government from the South Pacific, Mitterrand informed Muldoon that France intended to continue nuclear testing.⁴ After the meeting, Muldoon commented: "Essentially it seems to me that his policy is no different from that of the previous administration."⁵ The cessation had been made so that the new Defence Minister could review the activities of the CEP and assess to what extent experiments programmed by his predecessor would be retained. The review did not last long, as nuclear testing resumed on 8 July. (Table 51)

The continuation of nuclear testing by the Mauroy Government was illustrative of continuity with the preceding government in nuclear defence policy. In 1981, Mitterrand and the PS contested the elections expressing support for the development of the French nuclear deterrent. The 110 Propositions and the Créteil manifesto shared the same reference to the need to assure national security "par le développement d'une stratégie autonome de dissuasion".⁶ In June, after the presidential and legislative elections, Hernu stated his support for this policy, saying that he would work to modernise the French nuclear force.⁷ Three months later, Mauroy announced the support of his Government for this goal and extended it to tactical nuclear weapons: "Comme pour nos forces stratégiques, il convient de suivre les progrès techniques en adaptant et en modernisant périodiquement les vecteurs et les armes de notre armement nucléaire tactique."⁸ The technological development and continued modernisation of new weapons required further tests at Moruroa.

Chirac was in complete accord with Mitterrand and the PS on the need to modernise the nuclear strike force. Writing on French defence policy in April 1981, he described the nuclear strike force as the key to national defence:

LA DISSUASION NUCLEAIRE, CLEF DE NOTRE SYSTEME DE DEFENSE - La dissuasion doit rester la priorité absolue de notre défense, car elle seule protège notre territoire et l'ensemble de nos autres moyens de défense. [...] Il importe [...] par sécurité et pour être en mesure de répondre à toutes les hypothèses, de maintenir la diversité de notre panoplie dissuasive. Il faut donc poursuivre activement la modernisation [...] de nos forces nucléaires stratégiques.⁹

The year before, Giscard d'Estaing had announced modernisation measures for the French nuclear force. These were not to be implemented, even though Mitterrand and Chirac shared his stress on the need to update its weaponry. Giscard d'Estaing agreed with them on the importance of nuclear deterrence in national defence: "il y a un point central dans notre dispositif, c'est que toute attaque nucléaire sur le sol de la France appellerait automatiquement une riposte stratégique nucléaire."¹⁰ The three leaders shared the position that nuclear deterrence was France's ultimate response to foreign aggression. What differences did exist between Mitterrand, Chirac and Giscard d'Estaing in this field concerned the question of what modernisations should be made to the nuclear strike force, and how it should be deployed, considerations which led to differences being expressed in the meetings of the Council of Ministers during cohabitation from 1986 to 1988.¹¹ At no point did these three or their followers publicly question the need for France to retain nuclear arms. Some proponents of unilateral nuclear disarmament by France were present in the PS, but they were far from positions of national power. This Gaullist, Giscardian and Socialist commitment to the necessity of nuclear deterrence for French defence contributed to a fundamental unity over the nuclear dimension of South Pacific policy in the 1980s.

On the acceptance of nuclear deterrence, the PC did not beg to differ, as it did on DOM-TOM policy. On 11 May 1977, Jean Kanapa, a party spokesman, had announced Communist acceptance of the French strategic nuclear capacity, rejecting purely conventional defence systems as being inadequate to protect France.¹² However the Communist interpretation of the utility of the nuclear strike force diverged from the positions of the RPR, UDF and the PS. The nuclear arsenal was described as offering the means of protecting France from "imperialist blackmail", presumably of American provenance. Mention of the fact that French nuclear arms were targeted on various cities in the Soviet Union, and that all except the FOST was incapable of striking the American continent, was omitted. The Communists had abandoned their traditional opposition to nuclear defence, partly so that they could avoid characterisations by their opponents of the PC as the voice of Brezhnev, and partly to chase votes.

In the 1980s, the views of Mitterrand on the nuclear arsenal reflected an essential continuity with Gaullist nuclear strategy. Although the groundwork for the French nuclear force had been laid during the Fourth Republic, de Gaulle was generally recognised as having been responsible for the integration of that force into the national defence system. Pointing to the inability of France to defend its frontiers from foreign invasion with conventional arms during the Franco-Prussian War, World War I and World War II, de Gaulle adopted nuclear defence as the ultimate deterrent against foreign invasion. Any foreign aggression would be dissuaded by the consideration that France had great enough retaliatory means to cause the deaths of millions and the destruction of various cities. The adoption of nuclear deterrence also permitted de Gaulle to loosen ties with NATO in 1966, confident that in the near future France would no longer have to rely on the American nuclear arsenal to defend its territory.

While France had neither the means nor the interest to build a nuclear force as large as the US or Soviet ones, the Fifth Republic could at least dispose of the means sufficient to assure its defence. By the 1980s, Mitterrand shared this outlook:

La France ne cherche pas à rivaliser avec les arsenaux des deux plus grandes puissances, dont le surarmement déstabilise en permanence l'équilibre des forces et sape, de ce fait, les bases de la paix. Le principe de suffisance [...] implique que notre armement soit et reste capable à tout moment d'infliger à qui nous agresse des dommages intolérables. Par référence à ce principe, notre stratégie de défense met à la disposition de notre pays une panoplie assez puissante pour contraindre à la fois un adversaire potentiel à respecter notre indépendance et nos alliés à en tenir compte.¹³

Like de Gaulle, as President, Mitterrand stressed the need to retain the nuclear force to assure the protection of the Fifth Republic, and repudiated American claims to be the ultimate guarantor of the defence of Western Europe. As had been the case with de Gaulle, the possible foreign aggression Mitterrand had in mind when he talked of the need to defend France, was the threat posed by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. In the early 1980s, Mitterrand presented the Soviet Union as a major threat to French and European security. Without detailed resort to statistical evidence to back his case, he asserted in 1981 that "il existe une suprématie de l'URSS en Europe et j'y vois un réel danger".¹⁴ He repeated this assumption in later speeches and writing during the 1980s, making reference to a presumed Soviet superiority in conventional arms which rendered necessary the French resort to nuclear defence.¹⁵

History has passed by the scenario of a Soviet threat to Western Europe, just as events superseded the alarmist scenario of Soviet penetration in the South Pacific. In the late 1980s, glasnost reduced the tensions existing in Europe. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia has withdrawn its troops from Eastern Europe. Before these developments occurred, ongoing testing in French Polynesia was the consequence of the presidential opinion that France was in peril from potential Soviet aggression. Testing for constant modernisation was essential for the defence of France, and its halt could not be contemplated, according to Mitterrand, who wrote in 1986:

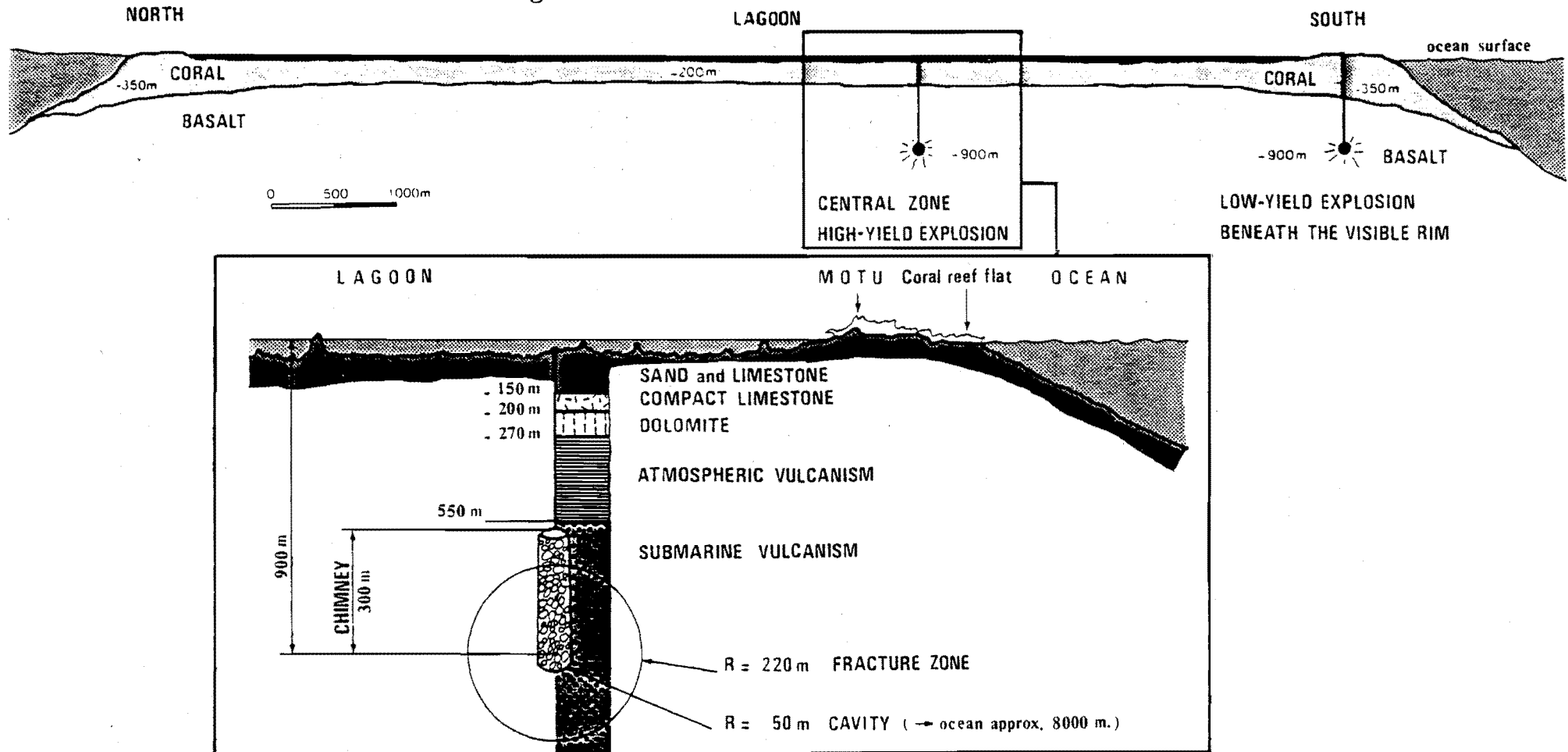
Toutes les puissances nucléaires sont contraintes de poursuivre leurs expériences souterraines et le font. En mettant fin aux siennes, la France se laisserait distancer dans sa connaissance des nouveaux systèmes d'armes, ce qui lèserait gravement la crédibilité de sa dissuasion.¹⁶

After his visit to Moruroa in September 1985, Mitterrand declared that France, like the other nuclear powers did, would continue testing as long as it seemed necessary:

J'ai réuni le comité de coordination du Pacifique sud [...] J'ai rappelé mes instructions: d'une part, la France, puissance présente au Pacifique, entend y décider souverainement de ce qui touche à ses intérêts nationaux. D'autre part, en application de cette règle, elle poursuivra autant qu'elle le jugera nécessaire, comme le font de leur côté les quatre autres puissances nucléaires: Etats-Unis, Union soviétique, Chine et Grande-Bretagne, les expérimentations utiles à sa défense.¹⁷

Until April 1992 this position was consistently repeated on innumerable occasions by French diplomats and Ministers in response to calls by South Pacific nations to end testing. France had no intention of submitting itself to unilateral nuclear disarmament in a period of superpower confrontation.

Figure 1. Test Conditions at Moruroa



Source: Ministère des affaires étrangères, Ministère de la défense, Commission française de l'énergie atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* p.16.

The Question of Safety

Throughout the 1980s, French officials insisted, as Rocard did to the audience at the Australian National Press Club in August 1989, that their nuclear testing was necessary in a world divided by superpower rivalry, and that testing presented no danger. Any suggestion that there might be safety problems on Moruroa or Fangataufa was usually met with official denials. French diplomats and visiting representatives repeatedly rejected any negative claims about the safety standards of the CEP, insisting on the infallibility of its technicians. In 1986 Mitterrand described testing as perfectly safe, presenting no danger either to the environment or to the people of the South Pacific:

Les Etats du Pacifique sud pressent la France de renoncer à ses essais nucléaires d'Océanie. Ils craignent les retombées atomiques, la pollution des eaux, de la flore, de la faune. Pour répondre à ce légitime souci, le gouvernement français a substitué en 1975 les essais souterrains aux expériences atmosphériques. Depuis lors, un système de contrôle mesure en permanence la radioactivité [...], analyse les prélèvements d'air et d'eau, surveille la sismologie.

Les expériences ont lieu à des profondeurs de sept à huit cents mètres dans la roche basaltique. Elles vitrifient la cavité provoquée par l'explosion. Aucune infiltration dangereuse n'a été relevée. L'innocuité est telle qu'aussitôt après les explosions, qui ont lieu à la verticale au dessous de Mururoa, il arrive à nos marins et à nos ingénieurs de se baigner dans le lagon.¹⁸

The cross-section in Figure 1 shows the conditions under which nuclear tests were made at Moruroa after the abandonment of atmospheric testing in 1974. Bomb explosions occurred either beneath the lagoon, or under the rim of the atoll. Opponents of French nuclear testing have, at various times, contended that the switch from atmospheric to underground explosions did not eliminate the potential for environmental contamination with radioactive waste. They have asserted that radionuclides, or radioactive particles, could seep from test shafts, either by venting to the top of the atoll, or through cracks in the atoll wall. Once released, radioactivity would contaminate the environment, drifting through the ocean or the atmosphere.

Such a possibility has been categorically denied by French officials. In a document entitled *French Nuclear Tests* prepared in the mid-1980s by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the French Atomic Energy Commission, the likelihood of dangerous leakage in the foreseeable future was ruled out:

The release of radioactive particles into the atmosphere is strictly out of the question, owing to the great depths at which the explosions take place. Thanks to the silica which constitutes the basalt, radioactive particles are either trapped in the vitrified lava resulting from the explosions, or absorbed by the rubble in the chimney.

Radioactive gases cannot be vented through the various geological beds because of the exceptionally long route up to the surface; venting is further impeded by the presence of relatively impermeable strata and by the presence of water in the terrain. Even supposing some gas were to percolate up through the terrain, it could only consist of small quantities of rare, chemically inactive gases, which do not remain in living organisms and have a very fast radioactive decay rate.

The lagoon is separated from the explosion cavities by more than 500 metres, the ocean by more than several kilometers. Radioactive residues could only reach the outside of the atoll from the cavity by a very slow diffusion process within the basalt. [...] Therefore one should not expect to detect any radioactivity whatsoever caused by underground testing within the next 500 to 1,000 years. By that time the low level of activity, coupled with natural

decrease and dilution, will have rendered any detectable traces infinitesimal compared with natural radioactivity.¹⁹

The possibility that nuclear testing might destroy the structure of the atoll base to the extent that leaks would flow through fissures created by explosions was also ruled out in the brochure. It declared that the geological structure of Moruroa was sound. Care had been taken to space the location of tests so that the local fracturing they created would not cause great structural damage:

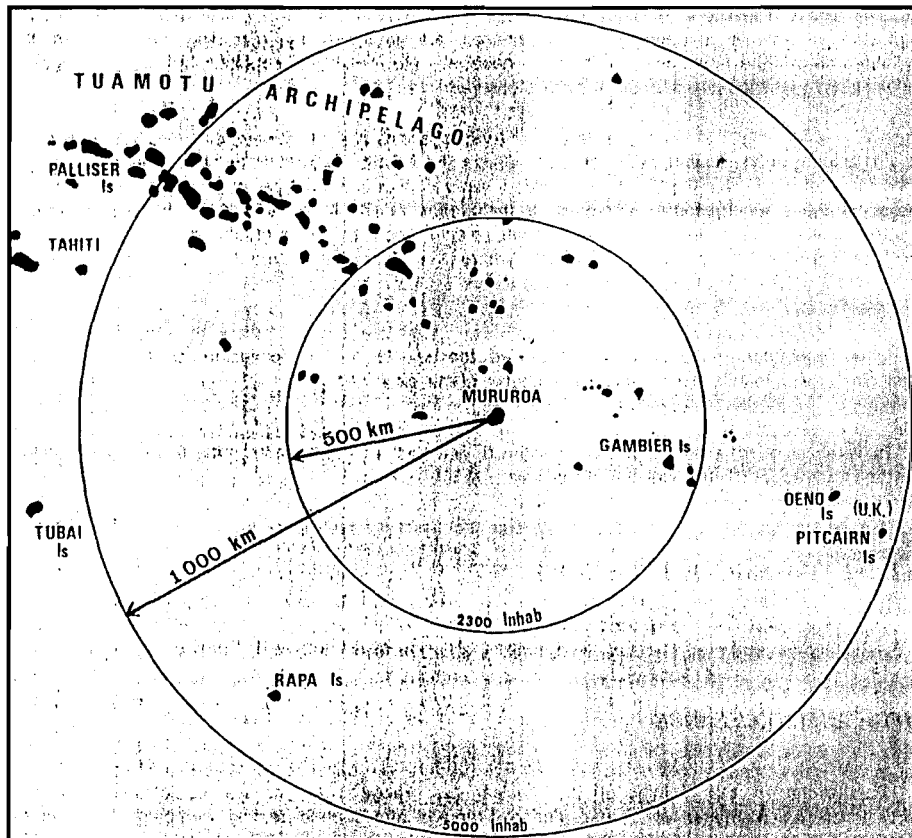
Some fissures have appeared on the outer reef at Mururoa. These cracks run parallel to the shore and are caused by subsidence of the slopes of the island massif under the weight of the overlying coral layers. This is a natural process, which has been observed on other Polynesian atolls such as Rangiroa. These cracks could of course shift under the effect of explosions. However, they are superficial and confined to the outer coral layers. A fracture zone is also observed in the basalt within a radius of 100 to 200 meters of the point of explosion. This is obviously taken into account when calculating the migration of radioactive materials. Because of the depth at which the explosions take place, this fracture zone is far from the surface, and farther still from the fringe of the atoll. So these two fracture zones are totally independent, and there is no possible communication between the two. Several hundred meters of undamaged rock overlying the point of explosion, and several thousand meters between that point and the ocean, guarantee the containment of the radioactivity.²⁰

Moruroa was characterised in the document as being geologically stable and unaffected by the tests. It was not admitted that external subsidence had taken place because of explosions. The importance of any seismic effects testing might have had was downplayed through emphasis on the "natural process" involved in the creation of any local fractures in the reef. Mention that these cracks "could shift" because of nuclear detonations was at best a vague, indecisive statement. Effort was made to point out that the limited nature of fracturing surrounding the bomb cavity precluded any leakage of radioactivity.²¹

This official image of an atoll externally unaffected by nuclear testing has been contradicted in other quarters. Perhaps the most credible authority in this regard is Admiral Henri Fagès, a former director of the CEP. While not going so far as to admit that it posed a danger, he indicated in 1988 that testing did cause geological instability at Moruroa. Surface subsidence was apparent around shafts where devices had been detonated, and tests produced a shock wave "qui se propage dans tout l'atoll, fragilise certaines parties supérieures des flancs de l'atoll et déclenche des avalanches sous-marines de débris accumulés depuis des millénaires, détectables par des seismographes et des microphones proches. Certaines provoquent une sèche suivie, en retour, d'un train de vagues [...]. Mais la structure d'ensemble du massif basaltique n'en est pas affectée. Elle ne l'est pas non plus par les cavités des tirs suffisamment éloignées les unes des autres pour démentir l'image répandue mais sans fondement, d'un «gruyère»".²² To what extent nuclear tests jolted Moruroa depends on which official source you choose to believe. Further evidence presented below suggests that Fagès was closer to reality than the anonymous authors of *French Nuclear Tests*.

Geography is another argument presented by official sources in defence of French nuclear testing. French authorities have gone to great lengths to point out the comparative remoteness of the CEP test sites. In response to regional claims that tests pose a threat to the inhabitants of French Polynesia and to neighbouring states, they have discounted them through resort to a geography lesson which indicated the thousands of kilometres between major population centres and Moruroa. For example, in a form letter sent in 1991 in reply to protest letters about French tests, Gabriel de Bellecize, the French Ambassador to New Zealand, wrote:

Map 9. Population around Moruroa



Source: Ministère des affaires étrangères, Ministère de la
défense, Commission française de l'énergie atomique:
French Nuclear Tests p.18.

The idea that New Zealand could possibly be inconvenienced in any way by our nuclear tests is completely absurd. New Zealand is further away from Mururoa than Paris is from certain Russian experimental sites and even further away than New York or Los Angeles are from the Nevada test range. [...] How can New Zealand, which is on the other side of the Pacific, feel that it is being endangered?²³

Hernu likewise produced this argument to question why New Zealand should be worried about French testing.²⁴ To back this position, *French Nuclear Tests* supplied maps comparing the number of inhabitants within a 1,000km radius of Moruroa, with the number of inhabitants falling within the same distance from the US and USSR test sites to demonstrate this remoteness. (Maps 9, 10, 11) They showed that around 5,000 inhabitants fell within this distance of Moruroa, compared with 37,500,000 within the same radius of the Nevada test site, and 4,195,000 near the Kazakhstan test range.

However illogical they might seem to French officials, anti-nuclear feelings have not been assuaged by their holders' sense of being distant from Moruroa. The distance argument has not deterred regional critiques of testing. Whether or not these tests take place hundreds or thousands of kilometres away from neighbouring island states, they are perceived by island leaders as morally wrong, and as occurring psychologically if not physically in their 'back yard', due to an energetically asserted pan-Pacific outlook.²⁵ Moral indignation and regionalist assertiveness however did not form the sole criteria for regional opposition to nuclear testing, as Régis Debray suggested in 1986.²⁶ Some scientific reasoning can also be attributed to this intransigence. Distance did not prevent low level radioactive fallout from French nuclear tests being scattered as far away from Moruroa as Western Samoa and South America from 1966 to 1974. Opponents to French testing wondered if such contamination might not reoccur if any radionuclides from underground testing leaked into the atmosphere or into the Pacific Ocean. The likelihood of this scenario is examined further below.

Finally, an element of distrust can be attributed to the rejection by South Pacific leaders of French reassurances. In the 1950s Britain and the United States had suggested that their nuclear testing in Australia and in the Pacific islands was innocuous. The ill effects of their tests on the health of Pacific islanders and Australian Aborigines living in areas touched by fallout from these explosions had become public knowledge by the 1980s. If officials from London and Washington had either purposely or unwittingly misrepresented the dangers of nuclear testing then it could be assumed by the sceptical that there was little reason why Paris would be any different in the 1980s. This attitude was difficult to dispell by official French assurances.

Symptomatic of regional distrust of French assurances concerning the safety of testing is a question frequently posed by South Pacific leaders: "if it's so safe why don't you do it in France?"²⁷ The equally well-worn response is that Moruroa and Fangataufa are parts of France, over which the Fifth Republic has sovereignty,²⁸ and that there is no basis under international law for it not to conduct tests there. Moreover, as there is no danger, why should France resort to the expense of relocating its operations? The sovereignty argument is extremely difficult to refute on the basis of international law, and regional leaders have not done so convincingly. Bill Hayden, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, attempted to cast doubts on the right of France to conduct tests in French Polynesia by singling it out as somehow different from other nuclear powers. On 25 October 1985, he argued that "France is the only country which continues to test outside the home territory of a nuclear weapons State", and called for testing to be shifted to metropolitan France.²⁹ The concept of "home territory" has no basis in international law, and is open to differing definitions.

French representatives would have argued that French Polynesia, as an integral part of the Fifth Republic, was very much "home territory".

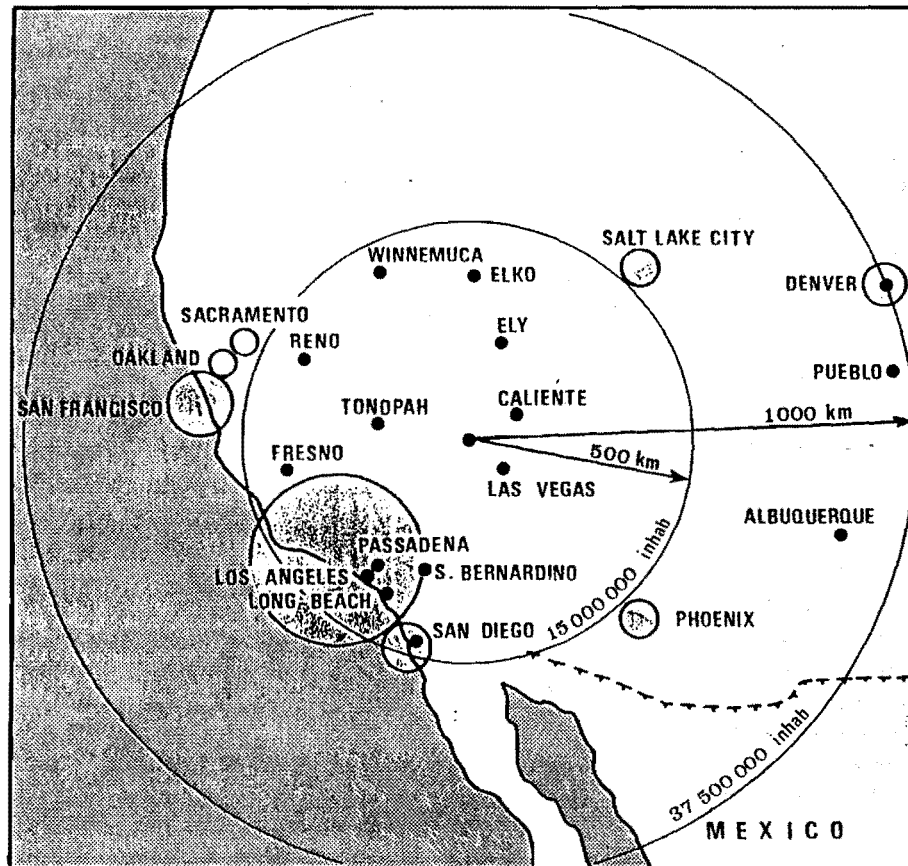
Even assuming this was not the case, the assertion made by Hayden contained a double standard which he did not seek to apply to the other nuclear powers. The Soviet Union held some of its tests in Kazakhstan, which was not self-evidently Moscow's "home territory". Like the indigenous inhabitants of French Polynesia, Kazakhs had their own culture and identity, distinct from that of the nation which had annexed them. Kazakhstan was a former colony of Tsarist Russia which had been retained by Lenin after the Russian revolution of October 1917. The Bolshevik fiction of a unified Socialist state transcending ethnic divisions was demonstrated by the balkanisation of the USSR from 1991. Regardless of the presence of Russian immigrants, Kazakhs asserted their particularism by declaring independence, whereas French Polynesians had chosen to remain within the Fifth Republic in 1958 and have since shown no sign of majority support for independence. Hayden would not have applied such criteria to the Soviet Union, probably for psychological reasons. It can be speculated that he failed to see any comparison between France and the Soviet Union in this respect because no expanse of ocean separated Kazakhstan from Moscow. Whether or not Moruroa or Kazakhstan qualified as the "home territory" of the governments which administered them in the 1980s, France and the Soviet Union reserved their sovereign right to test nuclear devices in their respective domains.

Apart from the status of Moruroa and Fangataufa as French territory, the comparative isolation of the two atolls was usually given as the traditional French response to the frequently repeated question "why don't you test it in metropolitan France?" French authorities have claimed that testing could not be conducted in metropolitan France because of the high population densities there. While French citizens would in no way be threatened by radiation, it was argued that the seismic effects from underground tests could destroy buildings within a 20km to 40km radius of any test site. It was asserted that testing could not be conducted in metropolitan France as there was no unpopulated area of this size.³⁰ The Australian Government has challenged this assertion. Hayden stated in Parliament on 11 September 1985 that sites existed in mainland France where testing could be safely conducted.³¹ He drew his conclusion from a report prepared in 1985 by the Australian Office of National Assessments, which stated that Guéret and Margeride, in the Massif Central, were suitable regions for conducting tests. On what precise criteria the Office based its judgement on the suitability of these locations is difficult to ascertain. The Office of National Assessments has not made its findings public, and as a rule does not circulate its materials outside official circles.³² Assuming that the Australian Government has not had second thoughts about the conclusions of the report, it appears incongruous that such information should be kept classified. The release of such technical data might serve to advance the case of regional opposition to French testing by refuting the claim that this activity cannot be conducted closer to Paris.

Another motive for conducting tests in French Polynesia, which French leaders tended not to indicate, was that relocating this activity to metropolitan France might have been politically unpopular on "home" territory. Although French citizens did not voice widespread anti-nuclear sentiment in response to the construction of nuclear power stations and the deployment of nuclear arms in their midst, they might have reacted differently to nuclear tests. One political consequence of holding nuclear experiments in French Polynesia has been that they have been physically and psychologically distant from the attention of metropolitan French voters.

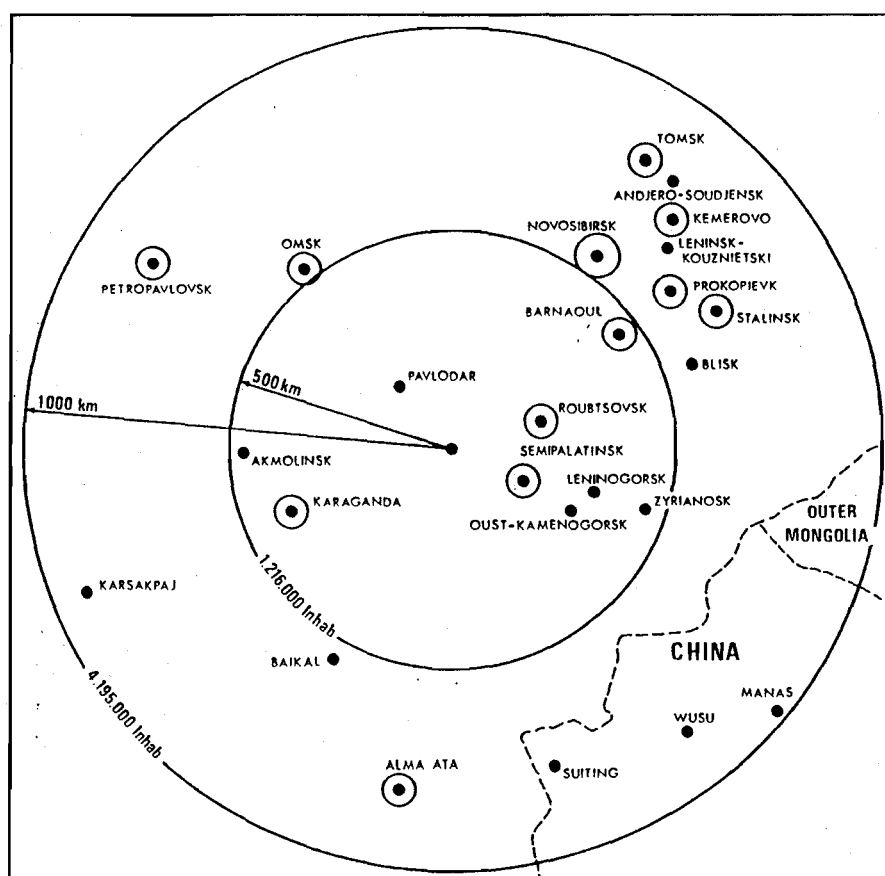
As well as ruling out any danger to the environment posed by possible radioactive contamination from underground tests, French experts have ruled out the possibility of contamination as a consequence of human error. Fagès stated that testing was completely safe, was carried out with great care, and had

Map 10: Population around the Nevada Test Site



Source: Ministère des affaires étrangères, Ministère de la défense, Commission française de l'énergie atomique:
French Nuclear Tests p.26.

Map 11. Population around the Kazakhstan Test Site



Source: Ministère des affaires étrangères, Ministère de la défense, Commission française de l'énergie atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* p.29.

never involved any major mishaps: "Sa préparation, son exécution et son exploitation sont entourés de garanties d'efficacité et de sécurité, et il n'y a jamais eu ni échec total, ni accident."³³ Interestingly, here Fagès effectively conceded the occurrence of partial failures in testing.

Certain incidents that have occurred since France shifted its testing underground give reason to disbelieve the assurance offered by Fagès that they have been conducted without accidents. From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, staff at Moruroa leaked information concerning a series of mishaps which did not reflect well on such assurances.

On 24 November 1977, hours after the detonation of a nuclear device, a tidal wave washed over part of Moruroa. The cause was probably that the detonation had blown away part of the atoll wall, although French authorities have been reluctant to admit a causal connection between their testing and tidal waves.³⁴ This event was not an isolated one. On 25 July 1979, a nuclear device was exploded after becoming stuck half way down a test shaft. It was detonated at a depth of only 400m, some 500m less than what was described as a safe depth for explosions in *French Nuclear Tests*.³⁵ Three hours later a tidal wave hit Moruroa, injuring six people. The CEP denied the wave was produced by the bomb blast. A geologist at Victoria University in Wellington, Dr Chris Burgess, speculated that the tidal wave had been caused by the force of the explosion blowing away part of the atoll wall.³⁶ In October, an official French investigative mission confirmed that the test had provoked the mishap, although no radioactive leakage was supposed to have occurred.³⁷

In spite of French claims that no radioactivity has leaked from Moruroa into the sea or atmosphere since the beginning of underground testing, radioactive waste has been spilled both into the atmosphere and the sea. On 6 July 1979, an explosion followed by a fire took place in a bunker where, according to the four survivors interviewed by reporters from *Le Matin*, nuclear detonation experiments were conducted. For economic reasons, it had been decided to reuse this bunker after a detonation had been made, requiring its decontamination of plutonium trapped there. A spark from a machine used in the decontamination process was reported to have ignited radioactive gas present, causing an explosion. One man was killed. Another had his chest crushed by a door which was blown off its hinges. He died in hospital. Four others were badly burnt and were sent with their dead workmates to Paris for analysis. It was claimed by *Le Matin* that the explosion released an unknown quantity of radioactive gas into the atmosphere. The CEP claimed it was a non-nuclear accident.³⁸ There was reason to doubt both sides on this final point. *Le Matin* might have gone too far in its search for a scoop, while the CEP might have been concealing something.

While human error might have caused the release of radioactive gas in this case, natural elements have been directly responsible for the release of solid radioactive wastes into the ocean around Moruroa. The greatest natural danger posed to Moruroa was its location at a latitude where cyclones are regular occurrences, which has led to safety problems. On 11 March 1981 a cyclone ripped off asphalt covering a nuclear waste dump on the north coast of Moruroa. Around 20kg of plutonium debris were washed into the lagoon and out to sea.³⁹ By 2 August 1981 the damage caused by this cyclone had still not been attended to. That day another cyclone scattered further radioactive waste into the lagoon.⁴⁰ By September 1981, civilian technicians at Moruroa were threatening to strike unless the radioactive waste scattered by cyclones was cleaned up.⁴¹ On 30 November 1981, three technicians on Moruroa circulated a report among personnel stating that radioactivity levels on Moruroa had doubled since July. The two cyclones in March and August had spread irradiated waste over an area of 30,000 square metres on the north beach of Moruroa. Extracts from the document were published in the London *Sunday Times*, generating adverse publicity not welcomed by the Mauroy Government.⁴²

Hernu finally admitted the waste problems to the National Assembly on 9 December 1981: "Il est exact que les déchets d'une explosion nucléaire antérieure à 1975, effectué sur l'atoll de Mururoa, ont été dispersés dans la nuit du 11 au 12 mars 1981 par une tempête, créant une situation radiologiquement nouvelle."⁴³ This was a curious euphemism for a nuclear waste leak. Hernu claimed that nothing greatly untoward had happened and that all was being taken care of: "Une surveillance radiologique est exercée en permanence sur toutes les catégories de personnel et, aujourd'hui, nous maîtrisons parfaitement la situation."⁴⁴ Concerning the above cases, the CEP has concluded that the radioactivity released into the air and sea did not pose great danger to the environment, although as opponents such as Greenpeace pointed out, the public only had the CEP's word on that.⁴⁵

These incidents have tarnished French assurances about the safety of the tests. French representatives would have preferred to avoid mention of the hazards posed to test personnel by the device exploded under irregular conditions, the gas explosion, tidal waves and passing cyclones.⁴⁶ French technicians at Moruroa have been proven humanly fallible by these misadventures. On the basis of these known problems, opponents to testing have been led to speculate that there might be other mishaps or safety irregularities which the CEP is either not aware of or is unprepared to publicise.

Since 1981 France has worked to counter such doubts by opening Moruroa to visits from scientists and regional leaders. This policy, implemented under Mitterrand from 1982, differed from that existing before his election. Under Giscard d'Estaing French and foreign journalists had periodically been permitted to visit the test facilities. Foreign requests for technical inspections of Moruroa were politely refused on the grounds of maintaining security and guarding national defence secrets.⁴⁷ Mitterrand projected his policy of openness as a model other nuclear powers should adopt. At the UN General Assembly on 28 September 1983, he invited other nuclear powers to follow the example of France and allow independent missions to their test sites.⁴⁸ This idea was not taken up. The invitation made by Mitterrand to have Moruroa independently investigated displayed a certain openness, while failing to answer various safety questions about the atoll.

The first independent report prepared on Moruroa under Mitterrand was made by Haroun Tazieff, a French vulcanologist who led a mission there in June 1982. This mission was described by its members as being of an exploratory nature and the report emphasised that its findings were by no means conclusive.⁴⁹ The mission lasted just two days, from 26 to 28 June 1982, inadequate time for anything more than a passing overview of test operations. The Tazieff mission returned from Moruroa with the conclusion that no urgent measures needed to be taken about safety there. The report concluded that a significant, although not dangerous, level of artificial radiation remained in the environment around Moruroa as a result of the atmospheric testing that had been carried out until 1974. It was judged that the effects of atmospheric testing represented neither a threat to the health of test site workers nor to the French Polynesian population.⁵⁰ The sea walls and platforms erected in response to the danger of natural and artificially induced tidal waves at Moruroa were described as adequate safety precautions for personnel on the atoll.⁵¹ Contrary to official claims the report indicated that testing had caused some local subsidence in the coral of the atoll, and that testing was responsible for the odd tidal wave. The possibility that subterranean explosions might lead to the leaking of radioactivity into the environment was not excluded, although the mission had not spent enough time on Moruroa, or had the equipment necessary, to conduct a geological survey.⁵² The report also claimed that there were risks of slight radioactivity escaping during test explosions, but doubted that this was sufficient to harm workers on Moruroa.⁵³ Formally, the Tazieff Report contradicted earlier French governmental claims that no immediate threat existed

of radiation leaking from underground test shafts. However Tazieff stated that even if leaks occurred, they would contribute negligible radioactivity.

The Tazieff mission was the first of three independent investigations of Moruroa that were made in the 1980s. The second was the Atkinson mission, led by Dr Hugh Atkinson of the New Zealand DSIR. In response to the presidential invitation to regional leaders that had been extended by Debray in June 1983, four months later Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea sent a scientific mission to inspect the atoll.⁵⁴ The findings of the mission were released in July 1984 in a document known as the Atkinson Report.⁵⁵ As was the case with the Tazieff mission, the Atkinson mission paid only a brief visit to Moruroa, lasting four days from 25 to 29 October 1983. The report concluded that environmental radiation on Moruroa was very low, and posed no danger.⁵⁶ No evidence was found of abnormal rates of cancer which might have been caused by radioactive fallout from atmospheric tests from 1966 to 1974. Like the Tazieff mission, samples taken by the Atkinson mission were from the surface of the atoll, and from the lagoon.⁵⁷ The Atkinson mission stated that radioactive waste management had been sorted out by the time of its arrival, and that this was no longer a problem.⁵⁸

The limitation of the Atkinson Report was that it arrived at no firm conclusions on the geological soundness of Moruroa. The team did not have the opportunity to conduct a geological survey and had to restrict itself to some general observations and conjecture. The most the Atkinson mission was able to do was to measure the venting of radioactive gas to the surface from an old nuclear test site. Although only one measurement could be made, traces of radioactivity measured were presented as confirmation of the assessment that radioactive gas was able to reach the surface after a test. The report noted that the mission was not given permission to gather data on the geochemistry of the atoll to ascertain to what extent radioactivity might leak from test cavities in general.⁵⁹

CEP officials were opposed to a geological examination of test sites on the grounds that defence secrets might be breached.⁶⁰ French unwillingness to allow a geological survey of test shafts raised questions among the sceptical concerning what motive the CEP might have for keeping this area of investigation off limits. Were they afraid someone might find a leak?

The report stated that nuclear testing had damaged Moruroa and that radioactivity could leak from the atoll, but was vague on the time span involved, saying that the potential for leakage would probably be fulfilled "in less than 1,000 years".⁶¹ It was pointed out by the Atkinson Report that water which had seeped into the base of the atoll was capable of leaching radioactive materials into the biosphere in the long term. The mission did not have the chance to obtain adequate data to enable a conclusion on the rate of this process.

The French response to the Atkinson Report was to hold it up as evidence that Moruroa was safe, despite failing to answer questions concerning the geological soundness of the atoll, and the capacity for leakage into the sea and air. *French Nuclear Tests* drew on the more positive parts of the report in its case for French testing. Mitterrand likewise presented the conclusions of the document in a positive light:

Ce rapport confirme les conclusions précédentes; les essais souterrains n'entament pas l'intégrité du massif volcanique et, de ce fait, n'entraînent pas dans la nature - et donc sur l'homme - d'effets délétères. Malgré tout, la campagne anti-française continue.⁶²

Perhaps it might be more accurately described as anti-nuclear campaigning rather than as anti-French campaigning. Whatever the accompanying adjective, as Mitterrand noted, campaigning against testing continued. The South Pacific Forum was less reassured by the Atkinson Report

than Mitterrand was. At its meeting in Tuvalu from 27 to 28 August 1984, the Forum decided that while the report reduced fears over short-term effects of testing, there were still grounds to doubt the long-term safety of testing. Forum rejection of French testing in the South Pacific was therefore retained and reiterated in the meeting's communiqué.⁶³

Forum opposition was prompted by the remaining uncertainties about the safety of the tests. Essentially, the doubts that had not been dispelled concerned the geological effects of testing. Comparatively little was known about what was happening to the base and walls of Moruroa as a result of nuclear detonations. It could be questioned just how much the CEP knew about the atoll base, as it was not equipped with a bathysphere capable of descending to the base of the atoll wall for an underwater geological survey.

The third independent mission to Moruroa was to highlight the limitations of what was known about the effects of testing on the geological structure of the atoll. From 20 to 25 June 1987, the Cousteau Foundation examined Moruroa, with the permission of the Defence Minister. The Cousteau mission differed from its predecessors in investigating the atoll wall and the floor of the lagoon with diving equipment. A submarine was used to examine, to a depth of 230m below sea level, the damage resulting from the test on 25 July 1979. Divers estimated that around a million cubic metres of debris had collapsed off the atoll wall as a result of the explosion, and they noted extensive faults visible to a depth of 180m.⁶⁴ The mission rejected the official assertion that such faults were natural and unrelated to testing. On 21 June, members were present for a nuclear test made under the lagoon. They were able to confirm that the explosion caused underwater fissures and rock falls on the external slopes of the atoll.⁶⁵ They were however unable to confirm speculation about the rate of radioactive seepage, admitting that it was difficult to gauge this effect of explosions due to the fact that the depth and location of faults within the atoll could not be observed.⁶⁶ The mission described the volcanic platform of the atoll as being a bad site for testing, because of the capacity of water to seep into test cavities and act as an agent to allow radioactivity to leach into the ocean. However the report also stated that as far as was known, there was no likelihood of radionuclides leaking out immediately, and by the time they did in several hundred years, any material would be very weak in radioactivity.⁶⁷

The rate and level of possible radioactive seepage, and the precise effects of fracturing within the atoll, are the crux of deciding whether testing represents a danger or not. Manfred Hochstein and Michael O'Sullivan, of the Geothermal Institute at the University of Auckland, have come to conclude with the aid of computer models that the rate of seepage from explosion cavities into the environment could require substantially less time than the several hundred years accepted by the three aforementioned reports. Their computer models demonstrated that convection currents might push radioactive material from a 10kT explosion at a depth of 550m a distance of 200m in around six years. A 100kT explosion at a depth of 1km could result in convection of 500m in 30 years.⁶⁸ If this rate was sustained the amount of time it could take radioactivity to reach the environment might be measured in decades rather than centuries. The authors could not find any reliable statistical data to support the assertion that radioactive material reaching the atmosphere or marine environment would be hazardous to the health of personnel on Moruroa.⁶⁹ Computer models, while enabling projections of what may happen, are not as reliable a source of data as measurements made *in situ* and over a long period of time, so the work of Hochstein and O'Sullivan was largely conjectural.

Conclusive judgement on what the effects of underground testing might have been cannot be passed without a detailed geological survey of Moruroa, including extensive examination of the floor of the atoll's lagoon and its outer walls to a greater degree than performed by the Cousteau mission. To avoid accusations of bias, such a survey would have to be conducted by an

independent third party which could not be associated either with the pro-nuclear or anti-nuclear camps. The French campaign of openness has not extended to permitting a prolonged, comprehensive, independent survey.

In the National Interest

Concurrent with the policy of promoting the activities of the CEP as safe, and of working to convince outsiders of this image through a restricted opening of Moruroa to independent inspections, under Mitterrand great efforts were made to defend the test programme from various perceived threats. The defence by the French State of its prerogative to detonate nuclear devices in French Polynesia has at times been asserted to the extent of employing acts of violence against its opponents, of which the most flagrant example was the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing in July 1985. This section considers the sometimes paranoiac attitudes that state officials have demonstrated in their defence of nuclear testing against its critics, and the alienation that French attitudes have prompted in the South Pacific. Although such attitudes could be considered ephemeral in the broader scheme of French South Pacific policy, their bearing on the biggest French diplomatic gaffe in the region during the 1980s, the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, is such that they merit examination. The decisions that led to the bombing, and the diplomatic consequences of it, are reviewed below in the context of regional policy.

Since the 1960s French Governments have guarded the operations of the CEP against outside criticism. In response to calls from French Polynesian autonomist parties to conduct a territorial referendum on whether testing should continue, or in reply to concerns expressed over safety conditions at Moruroa, the French Polynesian Territorial Assembly has been informed since 1963 that defence matters are beyond the realm of its competence.⁷⁰ As far as Paris was concerned, the territory abdicated its right to comment on Moruroa and Fangataufa when it ceded the atolls to direct state control in 1964.⁷¹ In any case territorial statutes before and since then reserved defence matters as a state domain.

Environmental activists who have criticised the CEP have sometimes been subjected to rough handling by the French authorities. Incidents occurred during the first Greenpeace campaigns against French testing in 1972 and 1973. On 1 July 1972, the vessel *Greenpeace III* was rammed in international waters by a French warship, *La Paimpolaise*, and had to be towed to Moruroa for repairs. The same vessel was boarded during another protest on 15 August 1973. Its captain, David McTaggart, and his navigator, were beaten up by a French boarding party. French officials denied the veracity of the assault. Their denials were undermined by photos produced by McTaggart's crewmates. Accusing the French State of piracy on the high seas, in May 1975, McTaggart was awarded damages by a French court in Paris for the ramming.⁷²

The state response to foreigners and to certain French citizens who have voiced opposition to testing in French Polynesia has been expulsion from the territory. McTaggart and his crew were deported in August 1973 and were informed that they would not be permitted to return to the territory. In March 1986, Dorothee Piermont, a West German Green member of the European Parliament, was expelled from French Polynesia for calling for a halt to testing.⁷³ In December 1990 French officials refused entry to the Greenpeace crew of the vessel *Rainbow Warrior II*.⁷⁴ These are just three selected examples of a practice that appears to have become standard procedure in French Polynesia. Anti-nuclear activists have been systematically treated as undesirable aliens who pose a threat to public order. Such expulsions mark the limits of the French willingness to maintain open debate on the CEP. As the individuals in question were foreigners, the French State has been able to employ its immigration laws to political ends in order to remove them. Against French

citizens protesting tests the State has had less leeway, although in the 1960s it chose to act punitively. On 10 October 1962, the French Governor in Papeete issued a decree banning a metropolitan French journalist from visiting or residing in all but the Marquesas. The man in question, Jacques Gervais, was a resident of Papeete who had written articles questioning the safety of proposed French testing. The order was issued on the authority of a decree dating from 1932, designed to quell fascist agitation under the Third Republic. Gervais could only with great difficulty have been characterised as a fascist. While the measure might have been contested as defamatory, Gervais chose to return to metropolitan France with his family.⁷⁵ A similar decree was issued in December 1963, forbidding Maurice Lenormand from visiting the Society Islands. This measure was taken at the time when Lenormand, as the Deputy for New Caledonia, was lobbying Paris for administrative reform in close cooperation with his Tahitian counterpart.⁷⁶ Both orders were politically motivated and infringed the civil rights of opponents to the regional policies of de Gaulle.

Before 1985, that the French guardianship of its testing operations could have extended to espionage and sabotage on the sovereign territory of an allied nation would have been considered incredible, except perhaps to members of the environmental movement who had been subjected to the censure of the French State, and to students of the history of French intelligence agencies. The *Rainbow Warrior* bombing was to lead to various revelations, extensively reported by the media, which displayed that France was prepared to extend its campaign against peace activists well beyond its frontiers.

The events surrounding the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing have already been discussed in exhaustive, repetitive, and partially conflicting detail. A recapitulation of those events is therefore somewhat superfluous. The various accounts concerning the bombing operation are listed in the bibliography. The motives for the bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior* merit closer attention here, as do its diplomatic consequences. The incident was undoubtedly damaging to the reputation of France in the South Pacific. Conduct by French officials before and after the bombing offers an insight into the depth of their pro-nuclear outlook, and the extent to which that outlook rendered them psychologically out of touch with anti-nuclear sentiment in the region.

The major motivation for the bombing appears to have been the impression that the operations of the CEP were being threatened by Greenpeace. Evident in the writings of high officials, from Mitterrand down, was the professed belief that France was being victimised by Greenpeace. This portrayal was taken to extremes in an attempt to portray Greenpeace as anti-French. In 1986 Mitterrand wrote in *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France*:

Quoi qu'il en fût, je n'ai pas eu connaissance d'actions pacifistes proches du lieu des expériences anglaises américaines ou russes. [...] La rigueur à éclipser de ces intransigeants n'est sans faille qu'avec nous. Il est difficile de ne pas discerner dans ce comportement une volonté politique à laquelle il ne reste qu'à opposer la nôtre.⁷⁷

Mitterrand attributed politically antagonistic, Francophobic motives to campaigning by Greenpeace against testing. Faced with such antagonism, France had to stand fast in its nuclear policy conduct. The sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing did not serve to undermine this conclusion. He concluded:

Après réflexion, il est apparu que leur objectif n'était pas tant de vérifier nos dires que d'entretenir une agitation politique hostile à la présence française dans cette région du monde. L'attentat perpétré dans le port d'Auckland contre le *Rainbow Warrior*, et la mise en cause de nos services secrets, ne changent rien au fond du débat. Personne ne peut tirer argument d'un acte qui n'engage pas moralement notre pays pour obtenir de lui qu'il relâche sa surveillance autour des atolls et renonce à ses essais.⁷⁸

Mitterrand's absolution of France from moral responsibility for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing hinged on the point that the Fabius Government was not necessarily to blame for the actions of members of its secret service. They had acted under the orders of officials in the Ministry of Defence. The Fabius Government had expressed its disapproval by dismissing the Minister of Defence and the head of the DGSE. France would continue to be vigilant against those opposed to its ongoing tests.

Charles Hernu, Minister of Defence at the time of the bombing, attempted to discredit Greenpeace by portraying it as imbalanced in its campaigning. Greenpeace was not acting on moral pacifist principles. Rather the organisation was a bellicose enemy of France:

Pourquoi «Greenpeace» ne s'attaquait-il qu'à la France? Un pacifiste, c'est un homme, une femme, qui demande le désarmement bilatéral, celui des deux grands. Le pacifisme unilatéral n'est qu'un bellicisme déguisé.⁷⁹

The argument that Greenpeace targeted only France and advocated unilateral disarmament disregarded the history of activism by the organisation against Soviet and American nuclear defence policy in general, and nuclear testing in particular.

Greenpeace was founded in 1971 in Vancouver, British Columbia, to protest US testing in the Aleutian Islands. Since then it has regularly mounted demonstrations against the US test programme. For example, in 1983, four Greenpeace activists penetrated the Nevada test site in an attempt to disrupt testing there. In April 1986, and in February 1987, similar efforts were mounted.⁸⁰ The anti-nuclear campaigning of Greenpeace members in Auckland, and of other peace activists, involved opposition to the US nuclear presence in the South Pacific as well as to that of France. From 1976 to 1984, the arrival of US nuclear powered naval vessels was regularly greeted by privately-owned boats, described as "the Peace Squadron", which attempted to block entry to New Zealand ports.⁸¹

Greenpeace protests against the nuclear arms race were not limited to Western nuclear powers. Greenpeace activists had experienced greater difficulties gaining access to the Soviet test sites to stage protests, but they had brought their anti-nuclear views to the attention of the Soviet Government. In 1982, the Greenpeace vessel *Sirius* sailed into Leningrad, the base for the Soviet Baltic fleet, to stage a demonstration against Soviet escalation of the nuclear arms race. The ship and its crew were expelled by the Soviet Government for distributing anti-nuclear leaflets and balloons. In 1990, a Greenpeace delegation travelled to Kazakhstan to declare opposition to nuclear testing there. That same year, Greenpeace sailed a ship to the island of Novaya Zemlya, in the Arctic Circle, where Soviet tests have also been carried out. A team was landed to measure environmental radioactivity and was caught, which resulted in another expulsion.⁸² Less spectacularly, Greenpeace members in Wellington staged regular protests against Soviet nuclear tests outside the Soviet Embassy in New Zealand during the 1980s.

That Greenpeace had taken great pains to oppose nuclear testing was not in doubt. To read anti-French sentiment into this campaigning was to ignore the multinational record of the body's efforts. There were certainly members of Greenpeace who opposed the French presence in the South Pacific, and who were perhaps motivated by a degree of Francophobia, although this was not surprising given the history of antagonism between Greenpeace activists and the French State. It is difficult however to characterise the organisation as a whole as particularly Francophobic. If its aim was to campaign to force the ejection of the French from the Pacific, its leaders have been curiously reluctant to advocate this line. Elaine Shaw, who led Greenpeace New Zealand's anti-nuclear campaigning from 1974 through till 1986, gradually came to believe that French

nuclear testing could only be stopped if France decolonised. She sought to convince Greenpeace International of the need to move beyond environmental issues and adopt policy supporting indigenous nationalist movements, not only in the Pacific TOM, but in the Pacific generally. This attitude was not shared by many of her colleagues within Greenpeace New Zealand, who felt that she was attempting to politicise the movement. Greenpeace International rejected her views in the early 1980s.⁸³

Considering the opinion, expressed in the highest quarters, that Greenpeace was hostile to France, there existed ample motivation in Paris to assent to espionage against the organisation. In the months before the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, at ministerial level there was no public hint from the Fabius Government that New Zealand was the subject of discontent in Paris. Protests by Wellington against French testing were long-standing, but they were less active in the early 1980s than they had been in the 1970s. In 1973 and 1974 New Zealand had conducted a case against French atmospheric testing with Australia at the International Court of Justice in the Hague.⁸⁴ In 1973 Norman Kirk, the Labour Prime Minister, had ordered the dispatch of RNZN frigates to waters off Moruroa to signal New Zealand opposition to atmospheric testing. Australian naval vessels also participated in this protest.⁸⁵ Since 1974 New Zealand reaction to French nuclear testing had been limited to paper remonstrations in the form of government statements after French nuclear tests, and speeches at international fora such as the UN. Up to 1985 these activities had not been characterised by French Governments as particularly threatening to French interests. Certain French opposition parliamentarians at the time were less resigned to accepting New Zealand and Australian anti-nuclear policy. These individuals were not in a position to influence the conduct of the Government. Michel Debré, the RPR Deputy for Réunion, in particular portrayed the two countries as having the intention to challenge French sovereignty in the South Pacific through their anti-nuclear declarations. In October 1984 he called on the Fabius Government to take more vigorous diplomatic action in response. This action in the National Assembly did not prompt any governmental measures to this end.⁸⁶ The position of the Fabius Government in early 1985 was that although France might have its differences with New Zealand over French testing, that was to be expected. During his call at Nouméa in May 1985, Hernu commented:

Alors je ne considère pas que les Néo-Zélandais sont nos ennemis. Ils ont une sorte de messianisme qui est le leur, protestant contre les essais nucléaires. Ils auraient dû le faire quand les Anglais faisaient les leurs... mais c'est comme ça, c'est la vie.⁸⁷

At the time Hernu made this comment, a French agent, lieutenant Christine Cabon, was already in New Zealand, infiltrating Greenpeace and gathering advance information for Operation Satanic, the DGSE code-name for the action against the organisation.⁸⁸

Not everyone in the French Ministry of Defence was as dismissive of New Zealand as Hernu appeared to be. The undertaking of a French espionage operation in New Zealand offered reason to believe that the country was considered, if not an enemy, then not exactly the closest of friends either. Henri Fagès, who was director of the test facilities at Moruroa until the end of June 1985, demonstrated publicly in 1988 that he viewed New Zealand as antagonistic, presenting it as a base for Greenpeace in its campaigns against French testing:

elle [la Nouvelle-Zélande] se veut la sentinelle de nos essais. Son gouvernement annonce officiellement toute détection sismique dont il attribue l'origine à un de nos tirs. Il est le seul au monde à agir ainsi, et il semble que ses laboratoires ne perçoivent jamais les essais du Nevada ou du Kazakhstan,

guère plus distants. Aussi, la seule organisation écologique contre nos essais, est bien implantée à Auckland. Ses dirigeants locaux recherchent, sans grand succès, l'appui des clans indépendantistes de Polynésie.⁸⁹

New Zealand did, as suggested, announce seismic tremors pinpointed as originating from Moruroa or Fangataufa. Until 1988, France issued few public details on its tests. In May 1988 the Rocard Government decided to release details of the number of French tests conducted each year. These disclosures have constituted the limit of French openness in this regard. The DSIR has filled this statistical gap since the 1960s. With a monitoring station in the Cook Islands it was arguably the best stationed foreign body to monitor French activity.

Some of what Fagès wrote was inaccurate. Contrary to what he claimed, measured either from the Cook Islands station, or from DSIR facilities in New Zealand, the US test sight at Nevada and the Soviet test sights were not scarcely more distant than Moruroa, as any casual glance at a globe proves. Fagès singled out, and linked together, New Zealand and Greenpeace in their opposition to French tests, suggesting a uniqueness which did not exist. The New Zealand Government was not the only one in the world to announce French tests. Australia did likewise. In furthering his case for complicity between the New Zealand Government and Greenpeace, Fagès neglected to draw attention to the fact that the organisation was as well implanted in Washington, London and Paris as it was in Auckland.

The claim that the Auckland members of Greenpeace had links with Maohi nationalists in French Polynesia was well-founded. Anti-nuclear sentiment in French Polynesia predated the foundation of Greenpeace, and Maohi nationalist formations have welcomed Greenpeace visits to Papeete. However Fagès misrepresented the relationship between Greenpeace and Maohi nationalists. It might be suggested, in contradiction to his claim that the latter had not supported the former, that it was Greenpeace which had not supported the pro-independence claims of Maohi nationalists. As mentioned above, neither Greenpeace International nor Greenpeace New Zealand have adopted anti-colonialist policies.

Fagès held that the Australian and New Zealand publics, through their anti-nuclear policies, were attempting to challenge France in the South Pacific. He went on to postulate that Australia had neo-imperialist designs on the Pacific TOM:

l'opinion publique d'Australie et de Nouvelle-Zélande a repris ses protestations après une accalmie qui a suivi l'arrêt des tirs aériens. C'est aussi une contestation de la souveraineté de la France sur ses territoires du Pacifique Sud. L'Australie, impérialiste sans en avoir conscience, revendique un contrôle de cet océan, contrôle dont elle n'a pas les moyens.⁹⁰

Australian and New Zealand public opinion against French nuclear tests did represent a challenge to French sovereignty over its Pacific territories, in that members of this public were opposed to nuclear activities which France had the right to conduct under international law. Moreover this challenge was less menacing to life and property either than Operation Satanik proved to be in New Zealand, or than French testing might conceivably be in the event of nuclear leakage from Moruroa or Fangataufa. However considering the portrayal of Australia and New Zealand by Fagès, it might be considered odd that their Labour Governments played no part in the 1985 Greenpeace campaign against Moruroa. In May 1985 Lange had refused formal calls by Greenpeace New Zealand to follow the precedent set by Prime Minister Norman Kirk in 1973 and to send an RNZN frigate to Moruroa with protest vessels.⁹¹ The New Zealand Government was not as vigorous a supporter of Greenpeace as was believed by French conservatives.⁹² Wellington and Canberra were less vociferous

opponents of the French Pacific presence in the 1980s than Fagès would have his readers believe.

The views of Fagès, however erroneous in some respects, were in 1985 to find a receptive audience in the upper reaches of the Ministry of Defence. Fagès was not alone in the high command with his concern over the security of the test facilities at Moruroa.⁹³ There, an espionage operation was set in motion which worked on the assumption that, as France was being victimised by Greenpeace and New Zealand, they were both legitimate targets for a French riposte.

The comments made by Fagès could be dismissed as marginal if not for the fact that it was on his recommendation that DGSE surveillance was mounted on Greenpeace to protect Moruroa from ecological activists. Vice-Admiral Pierre Lacoste, director of the DGSE, was approached by Fagès in January 1985. Lacoste was the recipient of an alarmist scenario painted by Fagès, who accused the DGSE of neglecting French security interests in the South Pacific at a time when anti-nuclear activism was mounting to the point where it would threaten testing operations on Moruroa. Lacoste responded that he would scale up the activities of the DGSE if he received word from his superiors to do so.⁹⁴ As Lacoste's immediate superior was Hernu, Fagès wrote a letter to him, date unknown, which called for surveillance of Greenpeace to be mounted in order to gauge its plans.⁹⁵

Hernu took the letter seriously, and met with Fagès on 4 March 1985 in Paris. Fagès presented a written report which reiterated his concerns, stating that he believed Greenpeace intended to sail the *Rainbow Warrior* and three other ships to Moruroa. On 24 June 1984, the day the Pacific Arts Festival was to be held in Tahiti, the ship would disembark Maohi nationalists in outrigger canoes to land on Moruroa.⁹⁶ This was an outlandish scenario, and the intelligence which Fagès drew on was lacking in credibility. The date for this projected Greenpeace action was notable for the non-arrival on Moruroa's beaches of this invasion of Maohi nationalists. On 24 June, the *Rainbow Warrior* was thousands of kilometres from Moruroa, en route from Kiribati to Vanuatu, and the ship was not scheduled to reach Moruroa until mid to late July.⁹⁷ Hernu said he would order the DGSE to take action to infiltrate Greenpeace and pre-empt its imagined operation.⁹⁸ During the following two weeks, Lacoste consulted General Jean Saulnier, the head of Mitterrand's military staff, who offered 4MFF to fund the operation. Saulnier eventually authorised the release of 4.5MFF for Operation Satanic on 8 July 1985.⁹⁹ On 18 May 1985, the DGSE was able to announce to authorised personnel that Operation Satanic was to be launched.¹⁰⁰ At this point, Operation Satanic does not appear to have been any more than an intelligence gathering mission with some possible sabotage envisaged. Were it to have been what was picturesquely described as an "opération homo", or a homicide operation, direct presidential assent would have been required.¹⁰¹

Mitterrand later admitted that he was aware of the concerns raised by Fagès about Greenpeace prior to the bombing.¹⁰² To what extent he knew about the concrete details of Operation Satanic is open to speculation. To what degree Saulnier kept Mitterrand informed of the operation is unconfirmed. Fabius does not appear to have known the operation was under way,¹⁰³ although soon after the bombing both he and Mitterrand became aware of the role of the DGSE. The death of the Greenpeace photographer Fernando Pereira during the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior* on 10 July resulted in Mitterrand separately questioning Hernu about exactly what the DGSE thought it was up to. The arrest in Auckland of two suspected French agents two days later, Alain Mafart and Dominique Prieur, later identified as French officers, added greater urgency to this line of questioning.

On 14 July, Hernu confirmed to Mitterrand that the DGSE had agents present in New Zealand, although he claimed he was not certain who had made

the decision to use explosives.¹⁰⁴ At this point, Fabius was also making inquiries. Even though his signature had been appended to the authorisation of the Operation Satanic budget, financed from a special fund administered by the Hôtel Matignon, this signature had been stamped by a subordinate rather than written by Fabius himself.¹⁰⁵ At a meeting with Fabius and Hernu on 15 July at the Elysée, Mitterrand informed Hernu that if the responsibility of the DGSE was publicly established, it would cost the Minister of Defence his post.¹⁰⁶ Fabius informed Hernu at a meeting at the Hôtel Matignon the following day that he would not cover the Minister of Defence either.¹⁰⁷

It was not until 22 September 1985 that Fabius apologised to the New Zealand Government for the bombing on behalf of France.¹⁰⁸ Comments in July from presidential advisors and the Prime Minister's advisors that French responsibility should be admitted had been rejected in preference to denials and protestations of officialdom's innocence. Initially it had been hoped that some amicable settlement might be made with New Zealand. This expectation misread the sense of outrage expressed by the Lange Government, and was not fulfilled.¹⁰⁹ In hoping that the incident would fade away, Mitterrand and Fabius underestimated the investigative abilities both of the New Zealand Police and of the French press. In Auckland, numerous members of the public contributed eyewitness testimony which established that Mafart and Prieur were involved in the bombing operation. The police were able to find out from Swiss authorities that the pair had been travelling on false Swiss passports, and that they and other French agents present in New Zealand had telephoned a DGSE number in Paris. From July to September, Mitterrand and Fabius experienced progressively greater difficulty denying that the order for the bombing had come from Paris and that the DGSE was responsible. Some wild attributions of blame for the bombing were being made by Hernu and his subordinates in the Ministry of Defence that did much to undermine the credibility of official protestations of innocence. In August, in a bizarre attempt to fuel the imaginations of Gallic subscribers to speculation over an Anglo-Saxon conspiracy, Hernu¹¹⁰ and Defence Ministry officials¹¹¹ claimed that the British secret service was responsible.

The official inquiry into the bombing, ordered by Mitterrand, resulted in the Tricot Report of 25 August 1985. The document exonerated the DGSE, concluding unconvincingly that its agents were merely in New Zealand on an intelligence gathering exercise which did not involve the infiltration of Greenpeace.¹¹² The leftist Parisian daily *Libération* sarcastically responded with the page one headline "TRICOT LAVE PLUS BLANC".¹¹³ Prime Minister David Lange declared on 27 August that New Zealand was not satisfied with the Tricot Report and required an apology.¹¹⁴ Nor indeed was Fabius satisfied. On 27 August he ordered Hernu to prepare his own report in an endeavour to find out who was culpable within the Ministry of Defence. Hernu drew the same conclusion as Tricot: although there had been French agents in New Zealand at the time of the bombing, they were not linked to the incident.¹¹⁵ Like other high officials in the Ministry of Defence, if Hernu knew what had happened, he was not prepared to say so.¹¹⁶

Eventually, the fact that New Zealand was holding two French agents contributed to forcing the Fabius Government into an admission of the responsibility of the DGSE. So too, from August to September 1985, did the investigations of the Parisian press, which led to various discoveries about the identities and activities of the French agents who participated in Operation Satanic. Denials by Hernu of any link between the bombing and the French Ministry of Defence¹¹⁷ were made to sound increasingly implausible. Hernu accused the press and all his other opponents of mounting a libellous campaign against him and his subordinates in order to attack French deterrence: "ce n'est pas le fruit du hasard si tous ceux qu'on attaque sont des hommes de la chaîne nucléaire".¹¹⁸ This was a case of Hernu trying to evoke sympathy for himself

and his subordinates as victims while simultaneously appealing to French concerns for national security.

As Fabius did not have any indication from Hernu as to who specifically had made the decision to bomb the *Rainbow Warrior*, he resolved that Hernu and Lacoste, as the two men at the top of their respective organisations, should assume responsibility. With the approval of Mitterrand, their resignations were called for. On 20 September, Hernu tendered his resignation, claiming that his subordinates had hidden the truth from him.¹¹⁹ Lacoste did likewise the same day. Hernu was replaced by Paul Quilès, previously Minister of Transport, while Lacoste's successor was General René Imbot, the Chief of Staff of the French Army. The pair were instructed to investigate who was covering whom, but were met with denials among their subordinates. For their part, neither Hernu nor Lacoste were prepared to contribute to these inquiries. Having already lost their posts they were disinclined to be so obliging. Hernu wrote two years later that he felt too much solidarity with his subordinates to assist any such inquiry, which is why he offered his resignation.¹²⁰ He continued insisting, as he did until his death in January 1990, that he had not given the order to conduct the bombing, and did not know who did.¹²¹ Mitterrand's position was that the affair was ridiculous, had gone on long enough, and that someone had to take the blame. He declared in 1989 that he doubted Hernu's profession of innocence:

Pour moi, c'était une exécution folle, une affaire idiote des services secrets, peuplés de minables, de malandrins. Aujourd'hui, mon interprétation, mon 'impression', c'est que tout cela fut un coup monté entre amiraux [Fagès et Lacoste]. Les marins de là-bas ont concocté leur affaire, et Lacoste, lui-même amiral, a chargé ses services d'exécuter cette 'belle opération'. Quant à Hernu, vous le connaissez, il a dû dire: "Ah! La bonne idée!"¹²²

This was a plausible explanation which was consistent with available evidence. In the absence of solid evidence to support this assumption though, room is still open for doubt as to whether Hernu knew about plans to bomb the *Rainbow Warrior*.

On 22 September Fabius belatedly admitted what the members of the French press had been asserting for weeks: that the DGSE was responsible for the bombing.¹²³ Further revelations to the public did not eventuate. Hernu and Lacoste had already shouldered the blame for the operation. It was considered unnecessary to punish the agents who had participated in Operation Satanic, on the grounds that they had been acting under orders. Imbot was not prepared to make inquiries which might demoralise the military or call into question its professional integrity,¹²⁴ an attitude which severely limited the extent of his investigation. By 27 September, Imbot had declared that the investigation was over. Exactly who had ordered what is still the subject of a great degree of uncertainty, although the resignations of Hernu and Lacoste marked the beginning of government efforts in Paris to resolve the implications of the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing.

The affair was not taken up by the Opposition to pillory the Fabius Government to the same degree as the New Caledonian troubles in 1984 and 1985 had been. Although various criticisms were offered around the time of the admission by Fabius of the DGSE's culpability for the bombing, they were not to endure to the extent of derisive comments about New Caledonian policy. The comments offered by the UDF, RPR, PC and the FN concerned rather the institutional implications of the affair for the Fifth Republic. Leaders of these parties were less preoccupied with the violation of New Zealand sovereignty, the death of Pereira, and the destruction of Greenpeace property, than they were with the consequences for the good reputation of France and of Republican institutions.¹²⁵ Charles Pasqua, a senior RPR representative, observed perceptively: "Ce que reproche l'opposition à Mitterrand, ce n'est pas d'avoir

engagé cette opération, c'est plutôt de l'avoir fait, comme tout ce qu'il fait, c'est-à-dire comme un zozo, avec un résultat grotesque."¹²⁶ Had Operation Satanic not gone awry and become a public matter, there would have been no grounds for complaint. In the absence of any incriminating evidence enabling New Zealand police to establish the involvement of the DGSE, the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing would have remained an unattributed crime. The reputation of the Republic would not have been besmirched.

The RPR placed the blame for the *Rainbow Warrior* affair on the Fabius Government, describing its conduct as amateurish. For the RPR there was no question of blaming military officials. On behalf of the RPR group, Claude Labbé stated to the National Assembly on 24 September 1985: "nous n'admettons pas que [...] soit reportée sur l'armée une responsabilité qui appartient tout entière au pouvoir politique".¹²⁷ The military officials were merely subordinates on whom Fabius and Hernu had failed to keep a tight rein. Pierre Messmer, a former Minister of Defence, had stated before Hernu's resignation that the Minister should immediately have accepted his accountability and quit his post.¹²⁸ Toubon called for Fabius to take responsibility for the bombing.¹²⁹ The RPR did not seek to attack Mitterrand, perhaps because its leaders were anticipating the need to maintain good relations prior to what would probably be a period of cohabitation from March 1986.¹³⁰

Jean Lecanuet, the President of the UDF, agreed with Labbé that the bombing was a political decision for which the military was not to blame, but looked further up the state hierarchy than Fabius: "Il n'est pas imaginable une seconde que la décision ait été militaire, le sabotage résulte d'un ordre politique venu du plus haut niveau [...]. Il n'est pas plausible que M. Mitterrand n'ait pas été au courant."¹³¹ The UDF rhetorically asserted that the affair was worse than the Watergate scandal.¹³² This, as it turned out, was an overestimation and a misinterpretation. Some UDF representatives called for Mitterrand's resignation, claiming that his image had been irreparably damaged, however their stance was unrealistic.¹³³ The President was not directly threatened by the consequences of the *Rainbow Warrior* affair. Other leaders in the UDF were more reticent to comment and no doubt were also anticipating the prospect of cohabitation with Mitterrand.

The PC was more outspoken. Marchais described the affair as a "mensonge d'Etat sur terrorisme d'Etat".¹³⁴ Le Pen pointedly remarked "ou bien M. Mitterrand n'était pas au courant, et alors c'est un jobard, ou il l'était et il est complice".¹³⁵ Either way he placed the blame squarely on Mitterrand, pointing out that as head of the French armed forces it was he who was ultimately accountable. Both Marchais and Le Pen could afford to be immoderate in their commentaries. For their parties, participation in a possible cohabitation was singularly unlikely, and did not influence party policy on this issue.

The RPR and the UDF were justified in pointing to the ineffective handling of the *Rainbow Warrior* affair by Fabius. Since July both Fabius and Mitterrand had been aware that the DGSE had been involved in operations in New Zealand against Greenpeace. A prompt admission in of this in July, some dismissals in the Ministry of Defence, and a rapid offer of reparations to the aggrieved parties would have done much to bring the situation under control at an early stage. In July neither Fabius nor Mitterrand might have had all the facts on the DGSE's operation in New Zealand, but nor did they have them by September. When they finally decided to act, controversy had escalated over the bombing, partly because of previous French denials.

The round of recrimination in Paris was not to last very long. Once the investigation at the Ministry of Defence had been declared closed, the French parliamentary parties largely closed ranks on the *Rainbow Warrior* affair. The fate of Mafart and Prieur became the new topic of the day, which led the Opposition to vent its discontent on the asserted obstinacy of the New Zealand

Government rather than on the supposed incompetence of Fabius.¹³⁶ Here, the major parties were united: whether right or wrong, the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing was an act of State, for which the French Republic collectively could accept culpability, but for which French officers acting under orders were personally blameless. They should not be punished for a decision which was not their own. The New Zealand stance was that the pair were possibly criminals, and their fate would be determined by New Zealand justice.

On 22 November, Prieur and Mafart were sentenced in Auckland by the New Zealand High Court to ten years' imprisonment for manslaughter. The verdict was arrived at on the first morning of the trial, without any presentation of evidence, after the prosecution and the defence had agreed that charges would be reduced from murder to manslaughter in exchange for an admission of guilt. The prosecution was uncertain of its ability to establish that Mafart and Prieur had been directly responsible for the death of Pereira. It was also in the interests of the French Government that the trial be resolved as swiftly as possible, with a minimum of factual revelations about the activities of its agents. There were suggestions in the French media that the Fabius and Lange Governments had come to an arrangement. This assertion was denied in Wellington, although the fact remained that for a criminal trial the hearing had peculiar features.¹³⁷

Lange stated after the verdict that the reduction of their sentences or their early release were not to be bargaining points in reparation negotiations with France.¹³⁸ Lange held to this position into 1986, but was forced to abandon it in the face of pressure from the Fabius Government and, from March 1986, from the incoming Chirac administration. The arrival of cohabitation did not produce any change in French demands for the release of the agents. From February to April 1986 the Fabius Government and then the Chirac Government oversaw the implementation of restrictions on New Zealand imports to France. Customs regulations and the resort to various bureaucratic subterfuges were used to delay and obstruct numerous New Zealand products. This activity started in late February when the importation of lambs' brains was suspended.¹³⁹ Although French customs officials claimed the suspension was for sanitary reasons, the timing of this and other hindrances placed on New Zealand wool, meat, fish, potatoes and kiwi fruit rendered suspect their claims to represent a disinterested bureaucracy. After the appointment of the Chirac Government, Michel Noir, the new Minister of External Commerce, announced on 15 May that France would oppose the renewal of the preferential tariff agreement on New Zealand butter exports to the EEC.¹⁴⁰

This announcement, on top of the customs blocks and delays to New Zealand goods exported to France, constituted great concerns for Lange. He had pointed out on 27 August 1985 that New Zealand could not afford to permit its relations with France to deteriorate too far over the *Rainbow Warrior* affair:

There are too many common interests and in particular New Zealand would be at risk if it had within the European market an implacable foe. What we need is an understanding associate. Therefore there is no suggestion that New Zealand diplomacy would set out to escalate this matter to the point where it rebounded on New Zealand.¹⁴¹

New Zealand trade with the EEC was too important to endanger. In 1984, around 20% of New Zealand exports were purchased in the Community. Annual New Zealand trade with France was worth around \$NZ270M.¹⁴² The lack of preparedness shown by Lange to negotiate the release of Mafart and Prieur as part of the arbitration of the bombing damages had resulted in trade considerations rebounding on him.

Commercial pressures forced a reconsideration in Wellington. Lange assented to putting the matter to independent arbitration, an option preferable to deteriorating relations with Paris. On 19 June 1986, the French and New Zealand Governments announced that they had agreed to arbitration of their

differences, to be overseen by Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. On 7 July, his ruling was announced.¹⁴³ Both countries agreed to its terms, which specified that in exchange for an apology from the French Prime Minister and reparation of \$US7M, New Zealand would release Mafart and Prieur for internment on Hao Atoll in French Polynesia for three years. France also agreed not to oppose New Zealand butter import quotas to the EEC for 1987 and 1988.¹⁴⁴ On 23 July, as agreed to in the arbitration accord, Mafart and Prieur were flown to Wallis, and then to Hao for internment. The commercial interests of New Zealand had ultimately taken precedent over the authority of the New Zealand High Court.

The Quai d'Orsay announced French satisfaction with the ruling and its intention to honour it: "il va permettre à la France et à la Nouvelle-Zélande de renouer des liens traditionnels d'amitié".¹⁴⁵ This was not to be the case. Differences surfaced over the ruling. Chirac broke the arbitration ruling by allowing the return of both Mafart and Prieur to metropolitan France before their three year sojourn on Hao was up. On 14 December 1987, Mafart arrived back in metropolitan France, reportedly suffering from a complaint that could not be cured by doctors on Hao.¹⁴⁶ On 7 May 1988, Prieur left Hao for metropolitan France as she was pregnant and her father was dying. Chirac claimed that the repatriations had not violated the arbitration agreement, while admitting to a degree of calculation in gaining the return of Prieur:

L'accord avec la Nouvelle-Zélande prévoyait que, si l'un ou l'autre était malade, il pourrait rentrer en métropole. Il prévoyait également que si Mme Prieur était enceinte, elle pourrait revenir. Le jour où les «Turenge» s'installent à Hao, je fais dire au mari de Dominique Prieur, lui aussi officier, qu'il va être muté là-bas et qu'il serait bien inspiré de faire rapidement un enfant à sa femme.¹⁴⁷

The accord did not in fact state that the pair could be returned to metropolitan France under the conditions Chirac mentioned.¹⁴⁸ Chirac failed to act entirely in accord with the arbitration agreement, and the two repatriations caused New Zealand to call for further arbitration in September 1988. After protracted consideration over the matter, on 7 May 1990, an arbitration tribunal meeting in New York resolved that France had not broken its obligations in repatriating Mafart, as his condition of ill-health was such that he had to be evacuated. In not returning him to Hao after his recovery however, France had violated the accord.¹⁴⁹ Prieur's departure had broken the accord as New Zealand had not given its consent to her evacuation, and she had not been returned after the birth of her child. There was no chance of them being returned in May 1990. The tribunal found that the three year period of their detention had expired on 22 July 1989, so there was no need to return them. To compensate, it declared that France should create a Franco-New Zealand friendship fund to make amends for its breach of the arbitration agreement of July 1986.¹⁵⁰

Before their arrival in government in March 1986, RPR and UDF leaders had attacked the Fabius Government for mishandling the *Rainbow Warrior* affair, portraying it as having handled the matter ineptly, and damaged the reputation of France. The Chirac Government was far less inept in its handling of the aftermath. The trade pressure it applied on New Zealand from March 1986 obtained the release of Mafart and Prieur to Hao, and the violation of the arbitration agreement obtained their return to metropolitan France. These measures damaged the credibility of two French Governments in the eyes of New Zealand officials. Neither the Socialists, nor the Gaullists, nor the Giscardians remained untouched by the aftermath of the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing. Under both the Fabius and the Chirac Governments, the French national interest was the primary consideration, whether it was deemed to involve the destruction of private property and the death of a foreign national in a New Zealand port, the coercion of the New Zealand Government into releasing French agents, or the violation of the terms of their release.

By May 1990 it appeared that the *Rainbow Warrior* affair had been resolved once and for all. This impression was confirmed when, on 29 April 1991 in Wellington, Rocard and Bolger signed an accord creating the Franco-New Zealand Friendship Fund, to which France had contributed 11.7MFF, a not insubstantial token of its good-will.¹⁵¹ The actions of the Fabius and Rocard Governments resulted in a third and final apology on behalf of France during the tour of New Zealand made by Rocard:

Des erreurs ont été faites dans le passé. La France a commis une faute. Je l'ai dit publiquement, je le redis ici. Des malentendus se sont développés, des incompréhensions nous ont opposés. Il faut aujourd'hui les dépasser. Il faut penser à construire l'avenir.¹⁵²

Rocard had the distinct advantage of not having been a member of the Fabius Government at the time of the bombing. He had resigned as Minister of Agriculture in April 1985, and he later criticised Fabius's handling of the *Rainbow Warrior* affair.¹⁵³

Although Rocard stated that it was necessary to go beyond past misunderstandings, the *Rainbow Warrior* affair was not yet in fact over. A strange coda to the affair took place in November and December 1991. On 26 November, Gérald Andriès, one of the French agents suspected to be involved in Operation Satanic, was arrested by Swiss officials. It became apparent that he was still the subject of an international arrest warrant issued by New Zealand in 1985.¹⁵⁴ The warrant for his arrest, and those for the other Frenchmen suspected of having played a part in the bombing, had not been withdrawn in spite of the settlement of differences between Wellington and Paris. The Swiss police detained Andriès and informed the New Zealand Government, which as a result found itself in an awkward position. Months after the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing had supposedly been settled, it had returned unexpectedly. On 17 December Doug Graham, the Minister of Justice, declared that New Zealand had withdrawn outstanding warrants for the arrest of those suspected of participating in Operation Satanic. There was no longer any intention of seeking to extradite Andriès and prosecute him, or to pursue any other French suspects over the bombing.¹⁵⁵ New Zealand Government papers obtained under the Official Information Act proved that the National Government, like the Labour Government in 1986, did not wish to antagonise Paris for fear of the threat of French trade reprisals.¹⁵⁶ The issue was finally closed.

The *Rainbow Warrior* affair constituted the negative side of French efforts to defend its nuclear policy. The incident harmed France's reputation in the South Pacific, although not irreparably. In spite of its protracted disputes with France since 10 July 1985, New Zealand at no point contemplated cutting off relations with France. New Zealand economic ties with Europe were considered too important to take this step. The *Rainbow Warrior* affair demonstrated that, however much a South Pacific nation such as New Zealand might contest aspects of French nuclear policy, it was not in a position of sufficient power to push its opposition. Although New Zealand had the support of Australia and of other South Pacific nations, they also had no intention of endangering their economic situations for the same reason as New Zealand: they depended to a greater or lesser extent on trade with the EEC. New Zealand did not receive any substantial support from Britain or the United States in its dispute with France.¹⁵⁷ As nuclear powers ruled by conservative governments, they had little sympathy for any problems Lange and his anti-nuclear Labour Government were having with the French,¹⁵⁸ and had still less empathy for Greenpeace, which had campaigned against British and American testing at Nevada as well as against Moruroa. The status of France as a fellow Western nuclear power far overrode any cooperation between what the French indiscriminately portray as three Anglo-Saxon nations.¹⁵⁹

The bombing showed the degree to which the French military and French Governments were at odds with anti-nuclear sentiment in the South Pacific. The argument that Mafart and Prieur were patriots doing their duty clashed with the popular New Zealand image of them and their colleagues as state-sponsored terrorists. Coming just one month before the annual meeting of the South Pacific Forum for 1985, the bombing was in addition unfortunately timed. It drew the attention of the international media to regional nuclear issues just as the South Pacific Forum was about to consider the creation of a South Pacific nuclear free zone.

A South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone?

Since the election of Mitterrand in 1981, the South Pacific Forum has been as constant in its repeated opposition to French nuclear testing as French Governments have been in their pursuit of it. With the exceptions of Tonga and the Cook Islands, which have wavered on the issue, both the Forum as a whole and its individual member states have reiterated their rejection of French reassurances about the safety of operations at Moruroa and Fangataufa. (Appendix 9)

While the PS was discarding its leftist anti-nuclear heritage in the 1970s, the anti-nuclear movement in the South Pacific was gaining a larger following in governmental and non-governmental circles. From its foundation in 1971, the South Pacific Forum offered an avenue for statements of anti-nuclear sentiment by regional governments. In 1973 and 1974 New Zealand and Australia challenged France over its atmospheric nuclear testing at the International Court of Justice in the Hague. In 1975, the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement, an international body of non-governmental lobby groups from the North and South Pacific, held its first meeting in Suva. Greenpeace, originally a Canadian group, spread to the South Pacific in the 1970s, with branches established by ecologists and peace campaigners in New Zealand and Australia.

The first proposal for a South Pacific nuclear free zone was submitted to the South Pacific Forum at its meeting in Tonga in 1975 by the New Zealand Labour Government. This proposal lost momentum after the election victory of the National Party that year.¹⁶⁰ Muldoon, the new National Prime Minister, was opposed to anti-nuclear sentiment as a threat to the Western alliance, and demonstrated this opposition by inviting US nuclear-powered warships to visit New Zealand. In Australia too that year, a Labour Government lost power, to be replaced by a new administration unsympathetic to anti-nuclear treaties. In 1983, the newly-installed Hawke Government took up the proposal at the meeting of the Forum in Canberra. Hawke sought a draft proposal which would ban all except the transit of nuclear weapons through international territory in the South Pacific, and which would allow port calls by nuclear powered and armed ships at the discretion of individual governments.¹⁶¹ It was apparent from the outset that Australia was concerned not to install a treaty which would disrupt its defence cooperation with the United States, although the proposal contained a clause opposing nuclear testing, a feature which would challenge French activities. These choices showed a degree of selectivity which left the proposal vulnerable to the accusation that it was anti-French.

It took two years before the South Pacific nuclear free zone proposed by Hawke was embodied in a document ready for acceptance by the Forum. It was tabled at the meeting of the Forum on Rarotonga on 6 August 1985, and covered the salient points outlined by Hawke in 1983. The articles of what became known as the Rarotonga Treaty were prefaced with an expression of regional concern at the advance of the global nuclear arms race that described the document as an attempt to further the cause of global disarmament, and to keep the South Pacific free from involvement in escalation.¹⁶² Under article 1, a nuclear free zone stretching from Australia to South America, and from the Antarctic to Kiribati and Tuvalu was declared. This huge expanse was rendered

less impressive by article 2, which stated that the zone would not infringe on rights of passage through international waters. All parties would pledge to refuse to manufacture nuclear explosive devices under article 3. Under article 5 they undertook to renounce the permanent stationing of nuclear explosive devices, although this condition did not exclude the possibility of allowing visits by foreign ships or aircraft carrying such devices. Article 6 rejected the use of the testing of nuclear explosive devices in signatories' territories. The Rarotonga Treaty was open to any member of the Forum, and there was provision for its ratification by nuclear powers.

Some Forum members chose not to sign the Rarotonga Treaty. Vanuatu rejected the document. Prime Minister Lini pointed out that it did not really create a nuclear free zone in that the United States and other nuclear powers would be free to transport nuclear arms through the South Pacific.¹⁶³ The Solomon Islands at first adopted a similar stance, then later signed the document at the meeting of the Forum at Apia in May 1987.¹⁶⁴ Tonga refused to sign for opposite reasons to these Melanesian members: its monarchy did not want to subscribe to a document which it felt might hinder US military deployment in the region. The Tonga monarchy was not greatly concerned by French testing, feeling that what France did on its territory was largely its affair. Tongan representatives have stated that the tests contribute to world peace by reinforcing Western security.¹⁶⁵ Although the rest of the Forum states signed the Rarotonga Treaty, the omissions undermined the customary stereotype of united regional opposition to things nuclear.

The initial official position of the Fabius Government concerning the Rarotonga meeting of August 1985 was that as France was not a Forum member, it would refrain from passing comment on the internal debates of the organisation.¹⁶⁶ When a Forum delegation arrived in Paris to lobby France from 6 to 7 February 1986 for ratification of the Rarotonga Treaty, the Fabius Government could no longer remain so circumspect. The Quai d'Orsay issued a declaration on 7 February which indicated that France was not envisaging a ratification of the document:

En particulier, la délégation française [à la réunion] a rappelé que l'interdiction proposée des essais nucléaires ne peut être envisagée que dans le cadre d'un processus à long terme de réduction des armements débouchant sur un équilibre des forces à un niveau considérablement réduit par rapport à ce qu'il est aujourd'hui. Pour la France, l'arrêt des essais ne peut être une condition ou même un préalable à la réduction des arsenaux nucléaires.¹⁶⁷

In other words, France would not contemplate stopping its nuclear testing unless first there was a massive reduction in nuclear arms on the part of the nuclear superpowers. A halt to French testing would not fulfil the agenda of the French Government requiring a global balance of nuclear forces at a considerably lower level before France would contemplate nuclear disarmament. Paris had been consistent in advocating this position since 1981.

Eight months later, on 3 October 1986, the Quai d'Orsay released another statement of French policy on nuclear testing, quoting Chirac's speech to the UN General Assembly in New York:

Aussi longtemps que la sécurité de la France passera par la dissuasion nucléaire, la première exigence qui s'impose à mon pays est de maintenir la crédibilité de ses forces stratégiques au niveau nécessaire. [...] Elle n'acceptera ni le gel numérique ou qualitatif de ses moyens, ni l'arrêt de ses essais nucléaires. Les premiers ne dépassent pas le niveau indispensable pour assurer notre sécurité et notre indépendance. Les seconds se poursuivent dans des conditions de sécurité et reconnues comme telles par des experts indépendants [...] La position de la France sur ce sujet ne se déterminera pas en fonction de celle d'autres Etats.¹⁶⁸

Those South Pacific Forum members with diplomatic representation at the UN were delivered a clear message. Although no reference was made to them here, Chirac signalled that France alone would determine under what conditions its testing would be halted. Chirac's position was in accordance with Mitterrand's and with that of the Socialist Prime Ministers who had preceded him since 1981.

On 29 September 1986 Emmanuel de Margerie, the French Ambassador to the United States, had stated at a conference at the Centre for Strategic International Studies at Georgetown University, Washington DC, that France did not intend to sign the protocols to the Rarotonga Treaty. He gave two primary reasons for this stance. Firstly, the South Pacific was a strategic zone: "We [France] cannot support a plan for regional denuclearisation in any part of the world where security appears to depend on nuclear deterrence". Secondly, France was not convinced the Rarotonga Treaty instituted a nuclear free zone: "We believe it would be a flagrant contradiction for States in the southern Pacific area to [...] participate in military alliances in these regions while at the same time claiming to be part of a nuclear free zone".¹⁶⁹

The proposition that the South Pacific was a zone of strategic significance was open to doubt. It was not a zone of superpower confrontation, and the French nuclear defence system did not extend to the region. Moreover the assertion that France could not support regional denuclearisation in any part of the world where security appeared to depend on nuclear deterrence had not been applied by France in the case of Latin America. As a regional response to the confrontation of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, in February 1967 Latin American states established the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which constituted the world's first nuclear weapons free zone. France, as a nuclear power with territory in the region, was directly concerned by this document. France signed protocol II of the document, which committed it to respect the denuclearisation of Latin America countries, although it refused to sign protocol I, which would have obliged it to denuclearise its Latin American domains.¹⁷⁰ The motive for this refusal was that Guyane was used as a transit point for the nuclear materials freighted to French Polynesia for the testing operations of the CEP, although as the Treaty of Tlatelolco did not expressly prohibit the transit of nuclear materials via Latin America, Paris was able to sign protocol II. France would have had similar leeway with the protocols of the Rarotonga Treaty. Although protocols 1 and 3 would have forbidden testing in the French TOM and were clearly unacceptable to France, protocol 2 consisted of an undertaking not to use or threaten nuclear devices against South Pacific parties to the Rarotonga Treaty, which would have been less onerous to sign.

French opposition to the Rarotonga Treaty was unconditional as the document was asserted to serve Soviet interests and erode regional security. As commander-in-chief of French Pacific forces, Vice-Admiral Thireaut indicated this attitude bluntly in March 1988. He stated to an Australian audience:

You know our position about the Rarotonga treaty: we are opposed to it, we will not sign any of its protocols and there is no point arguing about it. But I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this treaty served the Soviet's [sic] interests so well, that they signed it immediately. This treaty apparently provided more security for South Pacific countries, but we view it as an ineffective and useless arms control agreement.¹⁷¹

In January 1988 the Soviet Union ratified the protocols relevant to it (2 and 3),¹⁷² largely because in the absence of nuclear forces in the South Pacific it had little to lose strategically by doing so, and because the gesture created goodwill in the South Pacific. The document did not seriously obstruct the movement or possible escalation of the dominant US nuclear forces in the Pacific, and parties to the Rarotonga Treaty could still welcome nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed vessels from the US Navy or from any other. The Treaty did not prevent US nuclear deployment in the region.

De Margerie's second point is of greater interest. Although he was vague, he was making reference to the fact that the Rarotonga Treaty in no way disrupted regional, notably Australian, defence cooperation with US nuclear armed forces. In promoting its version of a nuclear free zone, the Hawke Government had been careful to draw up a document that did not challenge the Australian uranium mining and processing industry or disrupt US naval and airforce visits. It designed the Rarotonga Treaty partly to pre-empt the drawing up of a more extreme document by island states, and partly to appeal to regional anti-nuclear sentiment.¹⁷³ Seen from this perspective, the Treaty catered more for Australian national interest than for regional advocacy of nuclear disarmament. The provisions in the Treaty against nuclear testing support this assessment. As the sole nation conducting nuclear tests in the zone defined by the document, France was the specific target of these provisions. Just as the Rarotonga Treaty was selective in protecting Australian nuclear interests, so too it was selective in serving as a vehicle against French nuclear policy. Kim Beazley, the Australian Defence Minister, admitted as much in Washington on 1 September 1985, when he announced that the Rarotonga Treaty was "aimed at France".¹⁷⁴ Showing a hilarious sense of understatement, he added that Australia was not optimistic that France would approve the Treaty, although that it would serve to indicate the strength of South Pacific opposition to testing at Moruroa and Fangataufa. Any pretence the Hawke Government had to advocate regional nuclear disarmament was rendered highly suspect by the biased terms of the Rarotonga Treaty. Visits to Australian ports by nuclear-powered, and possibly nuclear armed, US Navy warships continued into the 1990s.¹⁷⁵

Frustratingly for Canberra after all its efforts to formulate conditions acceptable to the United States, Washington reacted defensively against the establishment of a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific. Like France, it refused to sign any of the protocols to the Rarotonga Treaty. On 5 February 1987 the US State Department announced the refusal of Washington to sign the Treaty.¹⁷⁶ Even though the Treaty did not seriously challenge US nuclear deployment in the Pacific, and no American nuclear testing had taken place there since the 1960s, the United States did not want to back the Rarotonga Treaty and thereby set a precedent for the creation of other nuclear free zones which might hinder its global interests. The suspicion also existed that if the Soviet Union was prepared to sign the Rarotonga Treaty it must be of benefit to Soviet strategic interests, and therefore potentially damaging to Washington.¹⁷⁷

The Chirac Government played a role in the US decision not to ratify the Rarotonga Treaty. A week before the US announcement, Flosse had been despatched to Washington in his capacity as government spokesman on nuclear testing to voice French opposition to the Rarotonga Treaty. He had met with George Shultz, the US Secretary of State on 26 January 1987.¹⁷⁸ The US decision was taken by Flosse to imply an unwillingness in Washington to oppose French testing and hence undermine solidarity between the Western nuclear powers. Flosse wrote in 1988:

Fort heureusement nos alliés américains et britanniques ont refusé, comme nous, de ratifier les protocoles annexes du traité de Rarotonga [...] Le risque aurait été de faire naître, sur un sujet aussi fondamental, une division entre Occidentaux. Lorsque je l'ai rencontré le 26 janvier 1987, M. George Shultz a porté une appréciation favorable sur la poursuite de nos essais.¹⁷⁹

Although Paris was not the only factor which motivated the American decision not to sign, the United States preferred not to inconvenience France by adhering to the Rarotonga Treaty. Washington supported the French territorial and military presence in the South Pacific, however small, as a stabilising factor in regional defence,¹⁸⁰ and was in favour of continued French nuclear testing.

In 1987 Admiral Baker, the Defense Department Director for the East Asia and Pacific region, stated in Washington to the US House of Representatives subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs:

The Free World and all those nations that wish to deter the expansionist policies of the Soviet Union benefit from the fact that there is a French nuclear test programme. Because French testing contributes an additional level of deterrence against Soviet nuclear capabilities the United States cannot in good conscience sign a protocol [the Rarotonga Treaty protocol] against it.¹⁸¹

Shultz shared this view, and outlined it during a visit to Western Samoa in June 1987. At a press conference in Apia on 23 June, he declared that the United States defended the French right to test nuclear devices in order to maintain a strong deterrent against possible Soviet aggression. He rejected claims that French testing posed an environmental hazard. Shultz mentioned the US refusal to sign the Rarotonga Treaty in the context of the necessity for continued French testing.¹⁸² As was the case with the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, the United States did not intend to break ranks with a fellow nuclear power.

Although for chronological reasons his visit could not have had an influence on the British decision to reject the Rarotonga Treaty, Flosse also discussed the document on 19 November 1987 in London with Lord Glenarthur, Secretary to the Foreign Office.¹⁸³ Part of his visit involved discussions on the British refusal to sign the Rarotonga Treaty, which had been announced in March 1987, in the aftermath of the US decision.¹⁸⁴ Flosse wrote of British policy:

Le soutien à nos positions [nucléaires] est plus nuancé à Londres, compte tenu des relations privilégiées qu'entretient encore la Grande-Bretagne avec l'Australie, la Nouvelle-Zélande et tous les Etats du forum du Pacifique Sud [...]. On perçoit cependant une certaine exaspération vis-à-vis de l'attitude néo-zélandaise de la part du gouvernement britannique.¹⁸⁵

Conservative Ministers in London, like their Republican counterparts in Washington, were predictably not enamoured with the espousal by the Lange Government of anti-nuclear policy, or with the spread of anti-nuclear sentiment generally in the South Pacific. By the 1980s Britain no longer had any military presence in the South Pacific, and was not directly affected by the installation of a nuclear free zone there. Nevertheless, the Thatcher Government chose to side with the United States and France on the Rarotonga Treaty. The British nuclear programme was heavily dependent on US technology and facilities. A declaration of support for the Treaty by London would have jarred in Washington. London shared US concerns about the possibility of the creation of further nuclear free zones, and was not prepared to undermine the nuclear policies of France.¹⁸⁶

The Rarotonga Treaty was the strongest regional expression of anti-nuclear policy aimed at France in the 1980s. It failed to halt French nuclear testing as it did not meet French criteria for disarmament. Moreover the ratification of the Treaty by Paris would have prevented further modernisation of its nuclear strike force. France's signature was never contemplated as a realistic prospect, either in Paris or probably in the capitals of the South Pacific. The non-negotiable French position on nuclear testing was well established, and had been reiterated for years. This consideration, combined with the lack of limitations the Treaty placed on the US nuclear presence in the zone, and the refusal of the United States to sign it, precluded any effectiveness of the document as an arms control measure.

After France had formally announced its rejection of the Rarotonga Treaty to the South Pacific Forum in February 1987,¹⁸⁷ Forum members returned to their more usual expressions of discontent about French testing.

Annual Forum communiqués ritually included a section stating disapproval of French testing and calling for its halt. Individual Forum members have also addressed their concerns to the UN General Assembly. (Appendix 9) Overall however, the nations of the South Pacific were powerless to halt French nuclear testing as long as Paris desired its continuation.

This lack of influence over French nuclear policy was not surprising considering the lack of diplomatic influence of Forum members. Any attempt by Forum members to coerce France in an attempt to sway its stance on testing would have been absurd. Written and verbal declarations of principled opposition have generally been used by South Pacific governments instead of sanctions. The one major exception to this rule only underlined the futility of South Pacific nations attempting to apply sanctions on France in an effort to influence its testing policy. On 10 June 1983, Hawke announced in Paris on behalf of his newly-appointed Government the decision to suspend Australian uranium exports to France in an attempt to force a halt to French testing.¹⁸⁸ Some members of the new Labor administration deemed it ethically inconsistent of Australia to protest French nuclear testing while supplying France with uranium, even if that material was contracted for use in non-military power plants. The Government compensated Australian suppliers by buying up the stocks destined for France. The suspension was more symbolic than intimidating, as Australia was not one of the major uranium suppliers to France. The non-delivery of Australian uranium to France disrupted neither its civil nor its military nuclear programmes, as ample supplies were available from African and Canadian companies. As well as being ineffectual, the embargo proved costly to the Hawke Government and had to be abandoned. On 19 August 1986, Paul Keating, then the Australian Treasurer, announced that the Government had decided to lift its uranium embargo on France. It had been decided to sell the stockpiles that the Government had purchased to cover a budget shortfall.¹⁸⁹

Australia, like New Zealand, did not have the economic power to mount effective trade sanctions against France, even assuming the political will to do so might have been present. Aware of the importance of European trade for Australia, Canberra, like Wellington, was not prepared to endanger its economic future by pushing opposition to French nuclear policy to this extent. The island micro-states of the South Pacific, with fragile economies dependent among other sources on French and EC aid, were still less prepared than Australia or New Zealand to contemplate this option. The decision to halt French testing was not to be made under the influence of South Pacific protests, because these exerted no great influence. Rather, and ironically, the impetus to suspend testing in French Polynesia came from Paris.

The Test Suspension: a Step Forward

The announcement by Prime Minister Pierre Bérégovoy in April 1992 that Mitterrand had instructed him to declare the suspension of French testing for the rest of the year came as a surprise. In an uncharacteristic move, Mitterrand intended the action to serve as an example for the other nuclear powers to follow.¹⁹⁰ Previously, faced with the far greater level of superpower nuclear armament, his attitude had been one of 'you first'. Mitterrand had announced in May 1989 that France would not halt its testing until the other nuclear powers had.¹⁹¹ Three years later, strategic nuclear tensions in Europe had declined to the extent that he was prepared to act as a pace-setter rather than a follower. The President pointed out in a press conference in Paris on 12 April 1992 that he reserved the right to recommence testing if he deemed it necessary.¹⁹² There was, he suggested, a chance that the example presented by France would not be followed. At the time of the French suspension, only Russia had ceased its testing, and that halt did not appear likely to last long. Although the Soviet Union had declared the suspension of its tests on 5 October 1991, it was the

Commonwealth of Independent States that had observed it. In April 1992 the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, had ordered the preparation of test sites on Novaya Zemlya. Four Russian tests were scheduled for October 1992.¹⁹³ That month President George Bush had no immediate intention of stopping US nuclear testing. The United States conducted six nuclear tests in 1992. Bush used his presidential power of veto to override a Senate resolution on 19 September 1992 calling for the suspension of US tests until July 1993 and their total halt from 30 September 1996.¹⁹⁴

The test suspension ran counter to all previous indications presented by Socialist Government Ministers on the willingness of France to maintain its deterrent. Until the announcement of the suspension, Paris had to all external appearances been prepared to continue conducting its tests. As late as March 1992, preliminary work for the series of tests scheduled at Moruroa that year was under way, activity which had attracted the traditional Greenpeace protests.¹⁹⁵ The position of the Cresson Government, like that of its predecessors since 1981, had been that nuclear testing was still necessary for the maintenance and modernisation of French defence systems. Prime Minister Cresson had stated to Jim Bolger, the New Zealand Prime Minister, during his visit to Paris in October 1991, that France had no intention of abandoning this activity.¹⁹⁶ Pierre Joxe, then Minister of Defence, had affirmed two weeks before the meeting that "la France fera des essais tant qu'elle aura des armes nucléaires".¹⁹⁷

While prepared to suspend testing, there was no presidential intention of abandoning the French strategic nuclear arsenal. Mitterrand had repeatedly declared in the 1980s that France would not contemplate any reduction of its nuclear arsenal until the two superpowers reduced their level of nuclear armament to a similar level to France's.¹⁹⁸ He maintained this position after the test suspension, as he pointed out in an interview with three French television reporters on 14 July 1992.¹⁹⁹ In spite of steps taken by Moscow and Washington since the late 1980s to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals, at the time of the announcement of the French test suspension, the superpower forces were still far larger than France's, and would remain so after envisaged reductions. In January 1992, France had a total of 791 nuclear warheads deployed in its nuclear strike force.²⁰⁰ After the announcement in June 1992 of further US and Russian disarmament measures it was estimated that by 2003, assuming full implementation of treaty measures, each country would be left with between 3,000 and 3,500 nuclear warheads.²⁰¹ This last projection fell short of a reduction similar to the French level of minimum dissuasive force deemed by Mitterrand in the 1980s to be the necessary precondition for Paris's participation in multilateral nuclear disarmament.

While Mitterrand's step was outwardly bold, France did not stand to lose much with regard to national security if it failed. The effectiveness of the nuclear strike force would not be affected by the halt of testing operations for a few months. Should other nuclear powers fail to follow the French example, Mitterrand would at least have the satisfaction that he had taken a positive disarmament initiative, and French testing could resume.

In November 1992 Mitterrand and Ministers of the Bérégovoy Government considered extending the suspension until July 1993.²⁰² The United States had prolonged testing until September but had announced a nine-month moratorium on 1 October. The explosion of two Chinese nuclear devices after the French suspension announcement in April was discouraging, although this development was outweighed in importance by the maintenance of the Russian test suspension.²⁰³ The announcement in November of any firm policy position on the extension of a French test suspension was precluded as a new period of cohabitation looked imminent from March 1993. Consequently no clear position was taken on what was to become of the French suspension in the first months of 1993. There was some speculation prior to the installation of the

Balladur Government that a return of the RPR and the UDF to power would result in a resumption of testing. By January 1994 this scenario had not eventuated. As head of the French armed forces, Mitterrand enjoys final say on matters of nuclear defence policy. In any event he has received the backing of the Balladur Government on the suspension.²⁰⁴

On 4 July 1993, Mitterrand announced that the French test suspension would be extended indefinitely, and he expressed French willingness to sign a total test ban treaty.²⁰⁵ The declaration came in response to decisions taken by Moscow and Washington. On 23 June, the Russian Foreign Ministry had announced that Moscow had no intention of renouncing its suspension.²⁰⁶ Hours before the extension of the French test suspension by Mitterrand, President Bill Clinton had prolonged the US moratorium until at least September 1994.²⁰⁷ Mitterrand's announcement went further than that of any other French President on the issue of nuclear disarmament, and he could do so without plausibly being accused of endangering the nation.

In 1993 Mitterrand was the first French President since the end of World War II who did not have to consider the threat of possible invasion or attack from Eastern Europe. The changing international situation allowed Mitterrand to contemplate the abandonment of aspects of Gaullist defence doctrine. For example in January 1992, he announced that France was open to the integration of the French nuclear strike force into a joint EC defence arrangement.²⁰⁸ That same month Mitterrand declared that in the 1990s the function of the French nuclear strike force would have to be reconsidered in response to international changes such as the end of the Cold War, European integration, and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Eastern Europe. He mentioned the possibility of French coordination with the British nuclear deterrent.²⁰⁹

Early commentary on the initial French test suspension of April 1992 asserted that Mitterrand had taken the measure to improve the popularity of the Bérégovoy Government among voters of the French Left. It was argued in particular that the Socialists were in search of votes from PS supporters who had left to follow the electoral coalition of two green parties, *Génération Ecologie* led by Antoine Waechter, and *Les Verts* led by Brice Lalonde. If so, it was an appeal exhibiting signs of desperation, and was made to a small segment of the electorate: one which failed to minimise the severe Socialist defeat in the legislative elections of March 1993. The argument that the Socialists were aiming to catch the ecological vote belittled the importance of the suspension and overlooked the fact that the ecological movement in France was not unambiguously anti-nuclear. Despite the fact that Lalonde, for example, had established his reputation as an anti-nuclear campaigner, prominent for his participation in protests off Moruroa from 1973 to 1981,²¹⁰ as Rocard's Secretary of State to Environmental Affairs from 1988 to 1991, he had expressed support for French testing and defended its safety.²¹¹

French peace organisations such as *Stop Essais*, *Le Mouvement de la Paix* and *Solidarité Europe-Pacifique*, as well as *Greenpeace International*, saw the suspension as a belated positive response to anti-nuclear campaigning since the 1970s. On 1 January 1992 French peace organisations, along with the Catholic and Protestant churches in France and other European countries, had organised a European Campaign for a Moratorium on French Nuclear Tests.²¹² *Greenpeace* members too preferred to think that the decision was at least in part a response to their anti-nuclear campaigning.²¹³ During March 1992 the *Rainbow Warrior II* had visited French Polynesia to signal opposition to the projected series of tests that year. This argument was a case of wishful thinking. If successive French Governments had refused to accede to demands by anti-nuclear movements to halt testing for so many years, there was little reason to think Paris would suddenly change its mind to satisfy them.

Following the decline in superpower confrontation since the 1980s, the most significant factor behind the French test suspension was to be found in

budgetary considerations. The ambition of French political leaders to maintain the standing of their nation as a nuclear power had always been limited by slender financial resources. The French nuclear deterrent had not been established at a level of minimal necessary dissuasive force solely out of free strategic preference. Paris had not had the means to establish a nuclear force as extensive as those of the Soviet Union or of the United States. The "very moderate"²¹⁴ level of French nuclear testing has been a consequence of the inability of Paris to fund testing on the same scale as the superpowers. The annual number of French tests generally declined from 11 in 1981 to four in 1991, and were held increasingly close together chronologically to reduce the costs involved in financing the operations of the CEP at peak activity. (Table 51)

French defence spending in general in the 1980s was the subject of some difficult decisions. Governments were faced with a shrinking defence budget, which fell from 17% of the state budget in 1981 to 14.9% in 1986,²¹⁵ at a time when the various branches of the nuclear strike force, and substantial segments of conventional forces brought into service in the 1950s and 1960s, were becoming obsolescent. Governments had to balance the distribution of funds necessary for the maintenance and development of conventional and nuclear forces, an act which they had difficulties performing. Important re-equipment programmes were delayed for lack of funds, compounded by technical delays and escalating research and development costs: the Rafale fighter and the Leclerc main battle tank were designs which had originally been intended for service in the 1980s, as was a new nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to replace the ageing *Clemenceau*. By the time of the Gulf War, none of these were yet in service, highlighting deficiencies in the re-equipment of French forces. France found itself increasingly restricted in its choice between conventional and nuclear priorities. The end of the Cold War and the advent of the Gulf War revealed the limitations of French defence funding priorities, which in the 1980s had given priority to the ongoing development of nuclear arms.

In the early 1990s it was decided that the decline in a military threat from Eastern Europe, and superpower nuclear disarmament, were circumstances which would permit several nuclear projects to be discarded or postponed to the advantage of conventional spending. The 1992 to 1997 military budget programme projected an annual average reduction of 6.6% in nuclear defence spending.²¹⁶ The projects rejected to fulfil these budget cuts implied some major reductions for the French nuclear force. For example, on 1 September 1991 it was declared that the strategic nuclear bombing force would be phased out by 1996, without being replaced or upgraded.²¹⁷ On 4 June 1992 the re-equipment of army units with Hadès tactical nuclear missiles was halted even though the programme was near completion. Those units which had been re-equipped were withdrawn from service and mothballed. By 1993, all prestrategic land-based nuclear arms had been withdrawn from service in the French Army. It was intended that the silo-based missiles on the Plateau d'Albion would be retired by 1996.²¹⁸ Again, no measures have been made to replace them. A project to have the missiles replaced with mobile launchers was cancelled by Mitterrand in July 1991.²¹⁹ If and when implemented, these reductions will leave the FOST as the sole remaining French strategic nuclear force by the end of the decade.²²⁰

In the early 1990s there was reason to believe that the French re-equipment programme for its nuclear force had been cut back so far that there might not be any need to carry out nuclear tests for some years. In 1992, the French military had only one new nuclear weapons design under development: the M5 missile, intended to re-equip the FOST, was due in service in 2005. The military were also contemplating a version of the M5 suitable for mobile launch from the Plateau d'Albion.²²¹ The test series in 1991 had already included work on the warhead for this missile before the test suspension. Further tests may not be required for the manufacture of these weapons.²²² In the 1980s, the French Ministry of Defence had argued that the explosion of nuclear devices was

essential to the research and development progress of nuclear weapons,²²³ and that computer simulations were not a fit substitute for the real thing. Since then, advances in simulation technology have been made, to the extent that a Ministry of Defence working party was set up in July 1993 to examine whether it would be feasible to use simulations rather than actual tests.²²⁴ François Léotard, the Defence Minister for the Balladur Government, was led to conclude in October 1993 that France could do without nuclear tests for "quelques années" without adversely affecting national security or the effectiveness of the French nuclear force.²²⁵ The working party presented its report to the National Assembly on 17 December 1993. The report concluded that in spite of advances in simulation technology and past tests, a further 20 tests would need to take place before real detonations could be discontinued.²²⁶ The possibility of a recommencement of testing therefore persisted in spite of the end of the Cold War.

The possible recommencement of nuclear testing was a prospect not viewed positively by certain functionaries in the Ministry to the DOM-TOM. Jacques Le Blanc, stationed there as the Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, commented in May 1992 that the suspension of testing removed a major barrier which had hindered the development of French relations in the South Pacific. He said that a recommencement of testing would have detrimental implications for these regional relations.²²⁷ Although at its meeting in Honiara from 8 to 9 July 1992 the South Pacific Forum praised the suspension,²²⁸ it indicated on 6 May 1993 that a resumption of testing would harm French relations with the region.²²⁹ The harmfulness of such a Forum response in this eventuality should not be overestimated. Were France to restart testing, it is probable that it would be faced with ineffectual, largely vocal and paper Forum protests of the sort it weathered during the 1980s.²³⁰

Notes

- ¹ Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* pp.6-7.
- ² See for example Henningham: *France and the South Pacific* ch.9; Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France*.
- ³ *The Star* 3 June 1981.
- ⁴ *Le Monde* 19 juin 1981.
- ⁵ *The Star* 18 June 1981.
- ⁶ Cited in Mitterrand: *Politique* 2 pp.312, 324.
- ⁷ *Le Monde* 11 juillet 1981.
- ⁸ *Ibid.* 15 septembre 1981.
- ⁹ Original capitals. Chirac: "Une politique de défense pour la France" in *ibid.* 22 avril 1981.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* 28 juin 1980.
- ¹¹ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 pp.632-658.
- ¹² Nay: *Les sept Mitterrand* p.190.
- ¹³ Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.26.
- ¹⁴ In an interview published in the West German magazine *Stern* on 9 July 1981. Cited in Henri Claude: *Mitterrand ou l'atlantisme masqué* p.51.
- ¹⁵ Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* pp.36, 192.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp.29-30.
- ¹⁷ *Le Monde* 17 septembre 1985.
- ¹⁸ Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* pp.27-28.
- ¹⁹ Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* pp.21-22.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.* p.22.
- ²¹ "No part of Moruroa has ever sunk into the ocean. On the other hand, occasional and partial submarine landslides have been observed on the slopes of the atoll. These landslides may have been caused by the swell, by natural hydraulic phenomena (e.g. Tsunami, storms, etc), **or perhaps even by an explosion**: any of these could trigger waves in the area concerned." *Ibid.* p.35. My bold.
- ²² Henri Fagès: "Un intérêt majeur de la France en Océanie: le Centre d'Expérimentations Nucléaire du Pacifique" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 87 année 1988 no.2 pp.16-17.
- ²³ Letter dated 29 July 1991.
- ²⁴ He stated on 18 September 1985 that "Paris est plus près des champs d'expériences nucléaires soviétiques qu'Auckland et Sydney ne le sont de Moruroa." *Le Matin* 19 septembre 1985. Hernu was correct only in Sydney's case.
- ²⁵ Chesneaux & Maclellan: *La France dans le Pacifique* p.28.
- ²⁶ *Libération* 14 février 1986.
- ²⁷ Or, as an Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement put it: "If France insisted on conducting these tests it should do so on its home territory, especially if the tests were as harmless as France claimed." *Australian Foreign Affairs Review* October 1985 p.1046.
- ²⁸ "France conducts her nuclear tests on sovereign French territory in the South Pacific." Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* p.31.
- ²⁹ *Australian Foreign Affairs Review* October 1985 p.1047.
- ³⁰ "France does not conduct its tests in Metropolitan France because the sole risk against which precautions need to be taken is that of local seismic disturbance. A nuclear explosion produces a series of surface vibrations with complex effects. These depend on geological properties, the yield of the explosion and distance, as well as the age, height and features of buildings and other exposed manmade structures. To prepare simultaneously for a sequence of tests, an area of 10 to 15 kilometers in radius is necessary. This area must in turn be surrounded by a very large zone, 20 to 40 kilometers in radius depending on the geological properties of the region with no vulnerable structures such as villages, bridges, churches, mines, etc. There is no area in Metropolitan France of this size capable of meeting these different criteria." Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* pp.13, 23. Cf. Fagès: "Un intérêt majeur de la France en Océanie: le Centre d'Expérimentations Nucléaire du Pacifique" p.16.
- ³¹ *Australian Foreign Affairs Review* September 1985 p.866.

- ³² Letter to the author from John Besemeres, Head of Europe, Americas, Middle East and Africa Branch, Office of National Assessments, 21 May 1992.
- ³³ Fagès: "Un intérêt majeur de la France en Océanie: le Centre d'Expérimentations Nucléaire du Pacifique" p.15.
- ³⁴ Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* p.246.
- ³⁵ Burrows et al.: *French Nuclear Testing, 1960-1988* p.14.
- ³⁶ Shaw (ed.): *Chronology* p.21-22; Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* p.265.
- ³⁷ *Le Point* 14 décembre 1981.
- ³⁸ Shaw (ed.): *Chronology* p.21; Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* pp.263-265.
- ³⁹ Shaw (ed.): *Chronology* p.23.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid. p.24.
- ⁴¹ Ibid. p.25.
- ⁴² Ibid. p.26.
- ⁴³ *Le Monde* 11 décembre 1981.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ⁴⁵ Cyclones have also represented a general safety hazard to the lives of personnel stationed on Moruroa. From 28 to 29 November 1980 a cyclone hit Moruroa, resulting in a natural tidal wave which injured some staff, and forced the evacuation of many others. In June 1981, Hernu ordered the construction of 4.5m high platforms on Moruroa, for staff to retreat to in the event of future cyclones. Shaw (ed.): *Chronology* p.23; Burrows et al.: *French Nuclear Testing, 1960-1988* p.15. From 1981 to 1982 two sea walls were also built to protect the facilities at Moruroa from cyclones. On the lagoon side the wall is around 2m high and 3km long, on the ocean side it is 4m high and around 4.5km long. Burrows et al.: *French Nuclear Testing, 1960-1988* p.15.
- ⁴⁶ In his form letter defending French testing, de Bellescize presented the image of test personnel living a relaxed lifestyle under the tropical sun, free of any dangers, nuclear or otherwise: "Claims that the tests are a danger to the surrounding inhabitants can be easily refuted. Presently living on Mururoa atoll, for a long period of time, are hundreds of French scientists and technicians. These men and women lead a perfectly normal life. They swim and windsurf in the surrounding lagoon. They also have access to all scientific information relative to the environmental conditions on the atoll. It is obvious that they would not contemplate endangering their lives, nor would they take the risk of having deformed children if they knew that their health may be at risk. [...] The same can be said for the Polynesians who share their lives with the French Metropolitans on the atoll. These workers are unionised: their unions ensure that they are well paid and, of course, that their work conditions are safe." Letter dated 29 July 1991.
- ⁴⁷ Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* p.212. In 1980, the French Government turned down a request from the New Zealand Government to send a scientist to check the safety of Moruroa. *The Press* 11 May 1983.
- ⁴⁸ Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Tests* p.22.
- ⁴⁹ Haroun Tazieff: *Rapport d'Haroun Tazieff sur l'ensemble de la mission scientifique en Polynésie française*. Juin 1982 p.1.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid. p.5.
- ⁵¹ Ibid. pp.2-4.
- ⁵² "L'onde de choc due à l'explosion et l'existence de la cavité provoquent l'effondrement de la cheminée et une fissuration de la roche encaissante. On ne peut pas exclure à priori que ceux des produits radioactifs qui sont normalement gazeux, ou très volatils, puissent partiellement s'échapper de la cavité au moins jusqu'à l'eau de remplissage du puits et, ce qui est encore plus improbable, jusqu'à l'atmosphère. [...] A plus long terme, il faut avouer qu'on a peu de données sur les risques de migration des matériaux radioactifs jusqu'à l'environnement." Ibid. p.6.
- ⁵³ "Depuis que les explosions sont souterraines, la contamination radioactive de l'environnement est devenue quasiment nulle à court terme. Cependant des risques limités de fuites de produits radioactifs existent toujours, au moment des essais. [...] De telles fuites accidentelles contribueraient de façon certainement négligeable à la radioactivité de l'environnement." Ibid. p.8.
- ⁵⁴ *Le Monde* 24 juin 1983.
- ⁵⁵ Hugh Atkinson et al.: *Report of a New Zealand, Australian and Papua New Guinea Scientific Mission to Mururoa Atoll*.

- 56 Ibid. p.7.
- 57 Ibid. p.3.
- 58 Ibid. p.12.
- 59 Ibid. p.9.
- 60 Charles-Henri Montin, Political Councillor at the French Embassy in Wellington, declared after the publication of the Atkinson Report that geological information was restricted on grounds of security. *The Press* 11 July 1984.
- 61 Atkinson *et al.*: *Report of a New Zealand, Australian and Papua New Guinea Scientific Mission to Mururoa Atoll* p.8.
- 62 Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* pp.28-29.
- 63 *The Press* 1 September 1984.
- 64 Cousteau Foundation: *Scientific Mission of the Calypso at the Mururoa Site of Nuclear Testing* pp.19-20.
- 65 Ibid. p.40.
- 66 Ibid. p.50.
- 67 Ibid. p.45.
- 68 M. Hochstein & M. Sullivan: "Geothermal Systems created by Underground Nuclear Testing: implication for long-term, direct effects of underground testing." Paper presented at the International Scientific Symposium on a Nuclear Test Ban, 15-16 January 1988, Las Vegas, Nevada. Photocopy p.1.
- 69 Ibid. p.13.
- 70 Danielsson & Danielsson: *Poisoned Reign* pp.63, 113-114.
- 71 For the details of this transfer, see "Délibération no.64-27 du 6 février 1964 portant cession par le Territoire des atolls de Moruroa et de Fangataufa à l'Etat Français" cited in *Bulletin de la société des études océaniques* no.232 tome 19 no.9 septembre 1985 pp.49-50.
- 72 McTaggart: *Greenpeace III. Journey into the bomb*.
- 73 Delius: *SOS Moruroa. Les essais nucléaires français dans le Pacifique* p.64.
- 74 *The Press* 19 December 1990.
- 75 The conditions of the decree are cited in Danielsson & Danielsson: *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale* pp.53-54.
- 76 Ibid. p.116.
- 77 Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.31.
- 78 Ibid. p.29.
- 79 Charles Hernu: *Lettre ouverte à ceux qui ne veulent pas savoir...* p.85.
- 80 Greenpeace: *French Nuclear Testing in Polynesia* pp.4-5.
- 81 For a history of this anti-American nuclear protest activity, see Tom Newnham: *Peace Squadron. The Sharp End of Nuclear Protest in New Zealand*.
- 82 Greenpeace: *French Nuclear Testing in Polynesia* pp.4-5.
- 83 Michael Szabo: *Making Waves. The Greenpeace New Zealand Story* pp.42-43, 85, 148-149.
- 84 See New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *French Nuclear Testing in the Pacific. International Court of Justice Nuclear Tests Case. New Zealand v France*.
- 85 See Tom Frame: "Gunboat Diplomacy?: the RAN and RNZN at Moruroa" in *New Zealand International Review* vol.16 no.5 September/October 1991 pp.20-25.
- 86 *Journal officiel. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale. Questions écrites* 10 décembre 1984 p.5452.
- 87 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 11 mai 1985.
- 88 Cabon arrived in New Zealand on 23 April 1985, and left on 24 May 1985. Michael King: *Death of the Rainbow Warrior* pp.49-59.
- 89 Fagès: "Un intérêt majeur de la France en Océanie: le Centre d'Expérimentations Nucléaire du Pacifique" p.18.
- 90 Ibid. p.18.
- 91 *The Press* 8 July 1985.
- 92 For example, Chirac stated inaccurately in September 1985 that the New Zealand Government had offered Greenpeace "soutiens politique, logistique, matériel, certainement financier": *Le Monde* 25 septembre 1985. Of these supports, only the first was offered on the issue of nuclear testing. Greenpeace is wary of receiving material aid from governments lest they attempt to influence its policies.

⁹³ General Jeannou Lacaze, the French Chief of Staff, stated at a conference in Paris on 13 January 1985 that internal destabilisation, terrorist or guerilla acts posed a possible threat to the security of installations in the DOM-TOM: "Nous devons y être particulièrement attentifs car le centre d'expérimentations nucléaires du Pacifique à Moruroa, [et] le centre spatial de Kourou en Guyane sont absolument essentiels au maintien de notre niveau technologique et, partant, à la cohérence de notre dispositif de défense." *Le Parisien libéré* 15 janvier 1985.

⁹⁴ R. Faligot & P. Krop: *La Piscine: the French secret service since 1944* p.281.

⁹⁵ The two recommendations made by Fagès to Hernu were: "1. The secret services must be asked to intensify the quest for information concerning Greenpeace intentions, the movements of its ships, the nature of the equipment they carry, the composition of their crews, their contacts with the land etc. This search for intelligence is designed to foresee, but also, if need be, to forestall the operations of Greenpeace.

"2. Action must be taken in such a way that the French Pacific forces are legally justified in forbidding the environmentalist ships access to territorial waters." Cited in *ibid.* p.295.

⁹⁶ J. Dérogy & J.-M. Pontaut: *Enquête sur trois secrets d'Etat* pp.264-266.

⁹⁷ David Robic: *Eyes of Fire. The Last Voyage of the Rainbow Warrior* p.37.

⁹⁸ Faligot & Krop: *La Piscine: the French secret service since 1944* p.296.

⁹⁹ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.337.

¹⁰⁰ Faligot & Krop: *La Piscine: the French secret service since 1944* p.296

¹⁰¹ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.331.

¹⁰² Mitterrand, interviewed 16 March 1989, stated: "Je recevais régulièrement le directeur de la DGSE, l'amiral Lacoste. [...] Au début de 1985, il m'a dit: «C'est embêtant, les gens de Greenpeace veulent encore aller à Mururoa.» Je lui ai dit: «Il ne faut pas qu'ils y aillent.»" Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.335.

¹⁰³ Dérogy & Pontaut: *Enquête sur trois secrets d'Etat* p.156. Hernu later said Fabius was aware, but a member of Hernu's cabinet contradicted him on this point. Also, Louis Schweitzer, then director of Fabius's cabinet, said that Fabius had not read Fagès's report. Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* pp.335-336.

¹⁰⁴ Franz-Olivier Giesbert: *Le Président* p.242; Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* pp.337-338.

¹⁰⁵ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.336; Dérogy & Pontaut: *Enquête sur trois secrets d'Etat* pp.281-282. The authorisation was also signed by Henri Emmanuelli, in his capacity as Secretary of State to the Budget: R. Shears & I. Gidley: *The Rainbow Warrior Affair* pp.50-51.

¹⁰⁶ Mitterrand stated in an interview on 16 March 1989: "J'ai alors dit à Hernu: "Mon pauvre ami, si cette affaire se vérifie, elle vous coûtera votre portefeuille." Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.339.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p.340.

¹⁰⁸ It was stated at that time that Greenpeace and Pereira's family were also to be sent apologies. "Communiqué du ministère des relations extérieures en date du 23 septembre 1985 sur les relations franco-néo-zélandaises après l'affaire Greenpeace" in *BIPA* green file 001 284 852010200.

¹⁰⁹ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.341.

¹¹⁰ Sir Geoffrey Howe, Secretary to the Foreign Office, made inquiries and assured Roland Dumas, the French Foreign Minister, that Britain was not to blame. Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.342. Inaccurate speculation was also spread by the French media. Various publications, according to their ideological predilections, chose a variety of supposed perpetrators. The PC newspaper *L'Humanité* (9 août 1985, 11 août 1985) discerned traces of the CIA, while to the extreme Right *Valeurs actuelles* (12 août 1985) saw the hand of Moscow. *Le Canard enchaîné* (14 août 1985) commented wryly: "Personne n'accuse les Belges, ils vont se vexer."

¹¹¹ *The Sunday Times* 1 September 1985; *The Press* 2 September 1985.

¹¹² The Tricot Report is printed in full in Claude Lecomte: *Coulez le Rainbow Warrior!* pp.151-168.

¹¹³ *Libération* 27 août 1985.

¹¹⁴ *The Star* 27 August 1985; *The Press* 28 August 1985.

¹¹⁵ Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand 2* p.345.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.347.

- 117 For example, Hernu stated in a communiqué issued on 17 September 1985 that "aucun service, [...] aucune organisation dépendant de son ministère n'a reçu l'ordre de commettre un attentat contre le *Rainbow Warrior*." *Le Monde* 19 septembre 1985.
- 118 *Le Matin* 19 septembre 1985.
- 119 "Les responsables de mon ministère m'ont caché la vérité." Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.348.
- 120 "J'ai été solidaire de ceux dont je me sentais responsable d'où ma démission le 20 septembre 1985." Hernu: *Lettre ouverte à ceux qui ne veulent pas savoir...* p.86.
- 121 *Le Monde* 27 novembre 1985.
- 122 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 pp.339-340.
- 123 Fabius stated: "Le nouveau ministre de la défense vient de m'informer des premières conclusions de l'enquête menée sur l'affaire du *Rainbow Warrior*. [...] Ces conclusions permettent désormais de cerner la vérité: ce sont des agents de la DGSE qui ont coulé ce bateau; ils ont agi sur ordre; cette vérité a été cachée au conseiller d'Etat Tricot." *Le Monde* 24 septembre 1985.
- 124 Upon his appointment, he declared his intention to preserve the honour of the armed forces, and praised the professional calibre of their personnel. Ibid. 25 septembre 1985.
- 125 Barre described the affair as "un problème d'autorité de l'Etat, un disfonctionnement des institutions". Chaban-Delmas declared that "le crédit de la France dans le monde ayant été très sérieusement compromis, celui du président de la République le soit aussi". Marchais stated that "l'autorité de la France dans le monde est atteinte". *Le Monde* 25 septembre 1985.
- 126 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.342.
- 127 Ibid. 25 septembre 1985.
- 128 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 19 septembre 1985; *Le Figaro* 19 septembre 1985.
- 129 *Le Monde* 22-23 septembre 1985.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Ibid. 19 septembre 1985.
- 132 *The Press* 19 September 1985.
- 133 *Le Monde* 25 septembre 1985.
- 134 *Le Quotidien de Paris* 24 septembre 1985; *Le Monde* 25 septembre 1985.
- 135 *Le Figaro* 19 septembre 1985.
- 136 Chirac, for example, described the two agents as "innocent" and called on New Zealand to release them. *Le Monde* 25 septembre 1985.
- 137 King: *Death of the Rainbow Warrior* pp.210-221.
- 138 "We are not about in New Zealand to sell two prisoners. It would be wrong as a nation if we did." *The Star* 26 November 1985. Cf. *Le Monde* 26 novembre 1985; *The Press* 27 November 1985.
- 139 *The Press* 25 February 1986.
- 140 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.354.
- 141 *The Press* 28 August 1985.
- 142 Ramesh Thakur: "A Dispute of Many Colours: France, New Zealand and the *Rainbow Warrior* affair" in *The World Today* vol.42 no.12 December 1986 p.210.
- 143 "United Nations Ruling Pertaining to the Differences Between France and New Zealand Arising from the *Rainbow Warrior* Affair" in P. Harris & S. Levine *et al.* (eds.): *The New Zealand Politics Source Book* pp.359-367.
- 144 "Communiqué du ministère des affaires étrangères en date du 7 juillet 1986 sur le règlement de l'affaire du *Rainbow Warrior*" in BIPA green file 001 458 862013700.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 "Communiqué du ministère des affaires étrangères en date du 14 décembre 1987, sur le rapatriement du commandant Mafart" in *ibid.* 002 177 882000900.
- 147 Favier & Martin-Roland: *La décennie Mitterrand* 2 p.355.
- 148 See "Exchanges of letters between the Government of New Zealand and the Government of France comprising agreements implementing the ruling of 7 July 1986 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations pertaining to the differences between New Zealand and France arising from the *Rainbow Warrior* affair" in *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives of New Zealand* 1987 A.24 p.2.
- 149 Mafart had refused a request made by Rocard in September 1988 to return to Hao. *The Star* 9 September 1988. No such demand was made of Prieur because of her baby.

- 150 "New Zealand vs. France: International Arbitration - Award of the Tribunal (1990)" cited in Harris & Levine *et al.* (eds.): *The New Zealand Politics Source Book* pp.370-374.
- 151 *Le Monde* 30 avril 1991.
- 152 "Déjeuner offert par M. Bolger, Premier ministre de la Nouvelle-Zélande (29 avril 1991). Toast de M. Michel Rocard, Premier ministre." Photocopied speech notes p.1.
- 153 "Les décisions prises contre le navire de Greenpeace pour la campagne de 1985 étaient techniquement inappropriées et scandaleuses par les conséquences possibles; on ne fait pas assauter un navire avec risque de mort d'homme, de surcroît dans le port d'un pays démocratique ami, et tout cela pour éviter une enième expédition symbolique des antinucléaires [...] une fois l'échec enregistré, il y avait une seule attitude correcte: mettre les cartes sur la table". *Libération* 17 août 1987.
- 154 *Le Monde* 27 novembre 1991.
- 155 *Ibid.* 18 décembre 1991.
- 156 *New Zealand Herald* 13 February 1992.
- 157 Thakur: "A Dispute of Many Colours: France, New Zealand and the *Rainbow Warrior* affair" p.212.
- 158 Jim Maclay, then leader of the National Opposition, pointed this factor out at the end of September 1985: *The Press* 1 October 1985.
- 159 Lange pointed this out in more colourful terms: "The absurdity of thinking you could rely on the United States and Great Britain to belt France around the ears for stopping someone questioning the fundamental basis of their entire political strategy is bizarre. One of the amazing things about the *Rainbow Warrior* incident was that the silence was deafening. [...] The reason is that it was inconsistent with their strategy to do anything which would upset a nuclear deterrent philosophy." *Peace Research* February 1991 p.3.
- 160 Michael Hamel-Green: *The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty: a critical assessment* p.84
- 161 *Ibid.* pp.84-85.
- 162 "South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty" in *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives of New Zealand* 1986 A.45 p.3.
- 163 *Vanuatu Weekly* 17 August 1985.
- 164 *Solomon Nius* 5 June 1987.
- 165 Richard Sola: "Le Royaume de Tonga, un Etat neutre du Pacifique. Interview de son Altesse Royale Tupouto'a, ministre des affaires étrangères" in *L'Afrique et l'Asie modernes* no.166 automne 1990 p.15
- 166 *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 28 octobre 1985 p.5088.
- 167 "Communiqué du ministère des relations extérieures en date du 7 février 1986 sur la dénucléarisation du Pacifique Sud" in *BIPA* green file 001 366 862003900.
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- 172 Hamel-Green: *The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty: a critical assessment* p.131.
- 173 "The scope and domain of the treaty are consistent with the drafting aim of protecting and legitimizing all present or contemplated US, ANZUS and Australian nuclear activities in the region while prohibiting French nuclear weapon testing in the region." *Ibid.* p.4.
- 174 *The Press* 2 September 1985.
- 175 The specific targeting of France in disarmament lobbying of the nuclear powers by the Hawke Government had first been demonstrated in July 1983. That month Richard Butler, a career diplomat, was appointed as the first Australian Ambassador for Disarmament. He was based at the Australian Embassy in Paris. *Pacific Magazine* September/October 1983 p.14. It could be argued that Washington or Moscow might have constituted more logical choices for first postings, given the far larger military arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union.
- 176 *Le Monde* 7 février 1987.
- 177 Ramesh Thakur: "Disarmament Before the Fact: the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone" in *New Zealand International Review* vol.17 no.2 March/April 1992 p.21.
- 178 *Le Figaro* 9 février 1987; *La lettre du Secrétaire d'Etat chargé du Pacifique Sud* no.3 mars 1987 p.2.

- 179 Flosse: "Sécurité du Pacifique Sud, Sécurité de la France" pp.10-11.
- 180 Admiral Ronald Hays of the US Navy stated during a visit to Tahiti in June 1986: "La France, depuis 150 ans je crois, est présente dans le Pacifique Sud. Et il est impressionnant de voir à quel point cette présence a engendré stabilité et prospérité dans cette région. Le problème de la sécurité de la zone Pacifique nous concerne tous. C'est dans ce sens que la présence militaire française contribue à maintenir cette sécurité." *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 17 juin 1986.
- 181 *The Pacific Review* vol.2 no.4 1989 p.329.
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- 184 Hamel-Green: *The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty: a critical assessment* p.129.
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- 190 Bruno Barrillot: "Essais nucléaires. Quel avenir pour le moratoire français?" in *Damoclès* no.55 octobre/novembre 1992 p.23.
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- 193 Barrillot: "Essais nucléaires. Quel avenir pour le moratoire français?" p.23.
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- 196 *Radio New Zealand* 30 October 1991.
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- 198 See for example Mitterrand: *Réflexions sur la politique extérieure de la France* p.22.
- 199 "Interview accordée par Mitterrand, 14 juillet 1992, à Gérard Carreyrou, François-Henri de Virieu et Paul Amar." Official transcript p.24.
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- 201 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 19-24 juin 1992.
- 202 Ibid. 6-11 novembre 1992.
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- 204 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 1-7 juillet 1993.
- 205 AFP communiqué 041034 JUL 93.
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- 208 *Le Monde* 12-13 janvier 1992.
- 209 Ibid. 21 janvier 1992.
- 210 See Toulat: *Objectif Mururoa*; *Le Monde* 6-7 novembre 1981.
- 211 See for example, his comments in *Canberra Times* 30 July 1988.
- 212 Barrillot: "French Finesse Nuclear Future" p.23.
- 213 Martin Gotje: "Suspension of French Tests: opportunistic or sincere?" in *Peacelink* May 1992 p.14; *Pacific Islands Monthly* May 1992 pp.39, 41.
- 214 Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Testing* p.11.
- 215 Jolyon Howorth: "Of Budgets and Strategic Choices. Defense Policy under François Mitterrand" in G. Ross et al. (eds.): *The Mitterrand Experiment* p.311.
- 216 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 3-9 décembre 1992.
- 217 *Le Point* 13 juin 1992.
- 218 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 11-18 juin 1992.
- 219 Ibid. 18-24 juillet 1991.
- 220 Bruno Barrillot: "Essais nucléaires français. Du moratoire à l'arrêt définitif" in *Damoclès* no.53 avril/mai 1992 p.25.
- 221 Barrillot: "French Finesse Nuclear Future" p.25.
- 222 Barrillot: "Essais nucléaires. Quel avenir pour le moratoire français?" p.24.
- 223 Ministère des Relations Extérieures, Ministère de la Défense, Commission Française de l'Energie Atomique: *French Nuclear Testing* p.11.
- 224 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 1-7 juillet 1993.

²²⁵ *Le Monde* 3-4 octobre 1993.

²²⁶ *The Press* 18 December 1993.

²²⁷ *Ibid.* 8 May 1992.

²²⁸ "Twenty-third South Pacific Forum. Honiara, Solomon Islands 8-9 July 1992. Forum Communiqué" in New Zealand Ministry of External Relations: *The South Pacific Forum: regional cooperation at work*. Information Bulletin no.41 December 1992 p.34.

²²⁹ *The Press* 7 May 1993.

²³⁰ In the meantime, the South Pacific Forum remains optimistic about the chances of the French test suspension becoming permanent, thus strengthening the force of the Rarotonga Treaty. The body has taken the opportunity that the US and French test suspensions have offered to renew lobbying for the Treaty. On 9 August 1993, the eve of the Forum meeting on Nauru, Jeremiah Tabai, the Forum Secretary-General, called on France, the United States and Britain to ratify the original terms of the Rarotonga Treaty. *Fiji Times* 3 August 1993.

7. The Question of Decolonisation

Je veux parler de la présence française dans le Pacifique. Celle-ci a longtemps été mal expliquée et partant, mal comprise et donc contestée. Elle a aussi été parfois mal avisée. Fort heureusement, le cours des choses est aujourd'hui changé et je crois y avoir pris une certaine part. Vous le savez, je suis un socialiste. J'ai passé une partie de ma jeunesse à lutter contre le colonialisme. Et les responsabilités que j'assume aujourd'hui ne m'ont nullement amené à renier mes convictions passées. [...] C'est pourquoi mon gouvernement mène aujourd'hui en Nouvelle-Calédonie, en Polynésie française et à Wallis et Futuna, une politique qui ne me paraît absolument pas assimilable à une politique coloniale.

Prime Minister Rocard at the Christchurch Town Hall,
30 April 1991.¹

Both Territories and Colonies

Rocard's image of his enlightened Socialist administration over the Pacific TOM overcoming the mentalities of yesteryear was tailored for consumption in a part of the world where the French Pacific presence had repeatedly been pejoratively characterised as colonialist. (Appendix 10) Rocard and other Socialist leaders since 1981 were selective in their references to colonialism, tending to use it in the past tense, in negative association with former French Governments of the Centre and Right, and in reference to a pre-World War II colonial past. Several examples of this outlook have already been presented in this work. Mitterrand was cited at the beginning of chapter 2 referring in 1986 to the need to eradicate colonialism in New Caledonia, while Rocard himself had in 1988 referred to the New Caledonian heritage of colonialism as the reason why the living standards of the indigenous Melanesians there were lower than those of the immigrant population.² Reference was also made in the introduction to chapter 2 of how Socialist parliamentarians, along with Communist representatives, employed negative references to colonialism when haranguing their RPR and UDF opponents in the National Assembly. Thus Socialist representatives used the concept of colonialism when referring to the distant past, or to periods in the more recent past when the Left was not in government. As Rocard did above, they refused to accept that their own policies could be associated with the term, owing to its antediluvian and reactionary connotations for them. RPR and UDF leaders rejected accusations assimilating a colonialist mentality to their policies, although they did not hesitate to use similar accusations to attack Socialist Government reforms.³ For Giscardians and Gaullists, as for the Socialists, the DOM-TOM were neither colonies nor the remnants of French colonialism, but stood as fully-fledged components of the Fifth Republic, representing a stake in France's global future, symbols of modernity and diversity.

In the 1980s the selective French use of the term 'colonialism' was rejected, both within the Pacific TOM, where indigenous nationalist groups such as the FLNKS regularly referred to France as the colonial power, and by their sympathisers elsewhere in the South Pacific, viewed France as the last of the European colonial powers in the zone. From these South Pacific vantage points, French colonialism was neither an outlook associated merely with the distant past, nor with periods of liberal-conservative government in Paris. French colonialism stood rather as the direct consequence of the annexation of lands which were not those of the Republic by right of original occupancy, and over

which unjust French claims of sovereignty had not been relinquished. Colonialism was viewed as existing irrespective of whether the Left or Right was in government in Paris, and was dependent on the consideration that Paris ultimately determined the administration of its South Pacific possessions from half a world away.

For the purposes of this chapter, the words 'colony', 'colonialism', and 'colonial', are not used in the limited senses ascribed above to metropolitan French political leaders. Analysis below is derived from broader, more neutral definitions that coincidentally agree with the characterisations of indigenous nationalists in the Pacific TOM. *Le Petit Robert* refers to a colony as an "établissement fondé dans un pays moins développé par une nation appartenant à un groupe dominant; ce pays, placé sous la dépendance du pays occupant, qui en tire profit". Under this definition, New Caledonia and French Polynesia were colonies by virtue of the military subjugation by France of their indigenous peoples in the nineteenth century, and their concurrent settlement by French colonists. New Caledonia and French Polynesia consisted of islands less developed than France, if considered by European economic criteria, over which Paris had imposed the preeminence of French settler communities. France had exploited its sovereignty over those two territories to various ends, although unevenly and not always with great success. New Caledonia served as a naval base, as a penal colony for those of its citizens considered undesirable, and later as a "colonie de peuplement" for law abiding citizens. While the local agricultural production of French colonists failed to become important on a national level, the exploitation of territorial mineral resources proved more significant. French Polynesia, while traditionally of little economic importance to France, has been strategically important. In the nineteenth century Papeete offered France a naval base in a region of expanding British influence. The significance of nuclear testing operations for the Fifth Republic has already been discussed. Wallis and Futuna does not fit the definition above very well, due to its original status as a French protectorate, the marginal level of French settlement there, and the minimal nature of both French economic and military activities there. Even though it was not a demographic colony, Wallis and Futuna had nevertheless been colonised in the sense that it was financially dependent on France and, like the other Pacific TOM, was ultimately controlled from Paris.

'Overseas Departments and Territories', the official nomenclature for these and the other French overseas possessions, was modernistic terminology introduced to replace the term 'colonies' after World War II. The name change was part of an attempt by Paris to retain its overseas possessions by introducing various administrative renovations which would allow the claim that France's relations with its domains had broken free of the model of a European colonial power reigning over its colonies. The change in administrative status was accompanied by the granting of French citizenship to inhabitants there, and voting rights to those of age. Under the Fourth Republic, it was hoped in Paris that the secession of French dominions would be staved off by placating nationalist aspirations to self-rule there through greater local participation in Republican institutions. This measure did not prevent the large-scale reduction of the colonial empire. During the 1950s the nationalists in most of the newly-instituted DOM-TOM became dissatisfied with the limited nature of the self-administration granted to their respective areas. The departmental standing of French Algeria could have been thought to have deterred indigenous nationalist claims until the second half of the 1950s, but it did not, just as the granting of territorial status to the components of Sub-Saharan French Africa did not block the growth of indigenous nationalism there.

Like the metropolitan French Departments, the remaining French DOM-TOM are still controlled from Paris. In the cases of the Pacific TOM, certain allowances have been made for a large degree of local administration, while the statute of each reserved sovereign control for Paris. Although their

administrative standings had been redefined under the Fifth Republic, the DOM-TOM remained French possessions to which metropolitan French citizens might migrate and where, in the case of New Caledonian Kanaks, a degree of subjugation was necessary as recently as the 1980s. In these respects, New Caledonia was not unique. For example parallels existed between the political situations of New Caledonia and Corsica. The Corsican nationalist minority has, like the FLNKS, resorted to violence in its assertion of local identity in the face of metropolitan French administration, the primacy of French institutions, culture, and immigration. The policy of successive French Governments since the 1970s has consisted of efforts to placate nationalist claims through the recognition of Corsican identity within the Fifth Republic.

Colonialism, according to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* is "a policy of acquiring or maintaining colonies". *Le Petit Robert* offers a narrower definition, listing "colonialisme" as meaning a "système d'expansion coloniale". The term is described as pejorative, a standing in line with its usage by French politicians in the 1980s. While France has not actively pursued the acquisition of colonies since the nineteenth century, the persistent policy of its governments into the 1990s has been to maintain its remaining possessions as long as most eligible voters there do not vote to leave the Republic. Paris has retained sovereignty over the DOM-TOM because they are considered either useful, or potentially useful to the Fifth Republic. France continues to exploit its sovereignty over those possessions to various ends. The DOM-TOM provide France with a global network of military bases, centres for high-technology projects in the cases of French Polynesia and Guyane, points for the spread of French cultural and economic influence, and hubs for regional development and cooperation work. In a literal sense deprived of emotive French overtones, administrative control exerted by Paris over the Pacific TOM, whether determined by French Governments of the Left or Right, can be defined as colonialism.

Rocard rejected any assertion that such administration constituted a colonial policy, for the reason that he considered such a description pejorative. If this French interpretation of the word 'colonialism' is taken alone, then Rocard could be considered correct. His policies could not plausibly be characterised as expansionary or reactionary, yet they do conform to the broader definition of 'colonialism' to be found in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*. During Rocard's period as Prime Minister, the rule of French law, the primacy of French institutions, and the priority of administrative policy determined by Paris were maintained in New Caledonia by the Matignon Accords of 1988, and in French Polynesia by the revision of the Internal Autonomy Statute in 1990. To this extent Rocardian reforms constitute colonial policy.

Under international law, in the mid-1940s France had been considered a colonial administrator of the Pacific TOM. The UN had never recognised New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna or French Polynesia as sovereign nations. Aiming to avoid provoking controversy among its founding members, the UN did not go so far as to define these and other territories as colonies, preferring instead to apply a technocratic euphemism to them: 'non-self-governing territories'. However enlightened the administrative policies of French Governments may or may not have been since then, and no matter what degree of administrative autonomy the Pacific TOM might have attained, legally France could not be considered to have decolonised them when it had neither formally nor informally renounced sovereignty. France was not alone in this regard. Other nations which had not renounced their sovereignty over various South Pacific islands were Chile, Britain, the United States and New Zealand. Directly because of South Pacific Forum lobbying, in the 1980s France was the only one of these external administering powers in the South Pacific to attract disapproval by the UN of its policies.

Representatives of the Chirac Government argued in 1986 that the South Pacific TOM had become integral parts of the Fifth Republic that should not be considered under UN decolonisation provisions. It was declared that New

Caledonia, like French Polynesia and to a lesser extent Wallis and Futuna, had attained a large degree of self-administration within the Fifth Republic and could not properly be considered non-self-governing territories. Moreover, under French constitutional practice full allowance was made for these territories' democratic self-determination. Nevertheless France could not be considered to have decolonised by having pursued a policy leading to the complete integration of its Pacific possessions into the Fifth Republic. Unlike the DOM, the Pacific TOM retained the constitutional right to self-determination, an important indication that they had not become indissolubly attached to the Fifth Republic.

Among other considerations, part 1 discussed the consequences of lobbying by indigenous nationalist movements in the Pacific TOM, notably New Caledonia, and the effect this development had on the formulation of French internal policy. This chapter is concerned with the implications that indigenous nationalist demands in the Pacific TOM posed for French foreign policy in the South Pacific. Attention below falls on the external dimension of the question of New Caledonian decolonisation. The assumption existed among the leaders of South Pacific governments that New Caledonia in the 1980s, like the New Hebrides in the 1970s, was on the verge of attaining sovereignty. The decolonisation of the New Hebrides falls outside the chronological frame of reference of this work, although mention of the implications of that event for Vanuatu support for New Caledonian Kanaks is made below. Because of the presumed imminence of Kanak independence, regional leaders gave the claims of the FLNKS a degree of prominence which they would not otherwise have gained. While Maohi nationalist parties of French Polynesia were sporadically active in soliciting international support, their marginal following in the territory in the 1980s left regional governments reluctant to take up their cause to the extent that they did in the case of the FLNKS. The high point of international lobbying for Maohi nationalists during the period under consideration came in October 1990. Temaru travelled to New York to lobby the UN and the Solomon Islands representative called, to no effect, for the reinscription of French Polynesia on the UN list of non-self-governing territories.⁴ No further significant observations can be made about the influence of Maohi claims to self-determination on French regional policy. The indigenous population of Wallis and Futuna did not have an independence movement, and thus French sovereignty there was an issue of neither internal nor international debate.

Political questions in the Fifth Republic related to its colonial heritage and demands for decolonisation were commonly considered in Paris to have been resolved under de Gaulle in the 1960s. Events in the 1980s suggested that this chapter of French history was not yet closed.

The Case for French Sovereignty

Whereas its nuclear testing was a policy issue which governments of the Fifth Republic had imposed on the South Pacific, decolonisation was a question which political representatives of the South Pacific pressed on Paris. As part of efforts to explain their regional policy by means of the sort of patient dialogue outlined by Cheysson in November 1981,⁵ French Governments of the 1980s found themselves having to respond to the governments of the newly-independent states of the South Pacific, which wanted to know why the self-determination demands of nationalists in the French TOM were not being met. In their attempts to improve French relations with the region through dialogue, French Governments tackled the problematic task of justifying the Fifth Republic's maintenance of sovereignty over its South Pacific territories to governments which had recently attained their own self-rule and were manifestly unsympathetic. In this section French justifications for sovereignty over the Pacific TOM are examined.

The defence of France's South Pacific presence in the 1980s rested on certain historical *faits accomplis* and constitutional points coherent to those who defended them, but which were less convincing to those who held that Kanak or Maohi claims had primacy. Those who advocated the case of indigenous nationalism likewise had recourse to historical precedent. They stressed the fact that Kanak and Maohi nationalists were the descendants of the original occupants of their respective islands. At its simplest level, the dispute between the two contesting nationalist legitimacies could be reduced to the slogans used in New Caledonia during debate over the question of independence. Banners belonging to French loyalists would proclaim words to the effect of "Ici, c'est la France!", while Kanaks brandished the slogan "Kanaky vaincra".

For the representatives of the French State, established French sovereignty was of overriding importance. New Caledonia was French, a "partie intégrante de la République" as Lafleur referred to it.⁶ The future of the territory would therefore be determined according to French law. Supporters of Kanak nationalism pointed to the comparative recentness of the establishment of French sovereignty over New Caledonia, and France's decolonisation of most of its colonial empire in the twentieth century, to suggest that French rule was a passing phase. They displayed a disregard for French law and questioned its legitimacy, considering indigenous rights to be paramount. However the FLNKS did not totally reject French institutions which, from a militant nationalist viewpoint, was perhaps its major philosophical inconsistency. The combative rejection of French democratic institutions expressed in the FLNKS charter, the document's accompanying declaration of a Kanak national liberation struggle, and the foundation of the provisional government of Kanaky, might be attributed greater credibility if the Front had not opted to participate in French democratic institutions since 1984.⁷ Having cooperated with the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute, and the Matignon Accords, as well as having accepted the conditions of the Rocard Government for a self-determination vote in 1998, the FLNKS can no longer consistently claim to be above French constitutional considerations.

The defenders of French sovereignty hold that in 1853 New Caledonia was occupied, but it had not previously constituted a sovereign entity, because it was balkanised among the numerous Melanesian clan groupings present. Although Mitterrand and Socialist Governments since 1981 have shown some sympathy for claims of Kanak nationalists, the authenticity of Kanak nationalism was contested by French loyalists in the 1980s. Nationalism, French loyalists pointed out, was a philosophical concept alien to traditional Melanesian values. It had taken until the 1970s for the concepts of Kanak nationalism and an independent Kanaky to begin to be accepted among New Caledonia's Melanesians. By that stage, French sovereignty had long been established, to the point of being incontestable. The inhabitants of New Caledonia were French by nationality, and benefited from essentially the same rights under Republican law as citizens of metropolitan France. Under these conditions, to claim Kanak independence in New Caledonia by reference to the right of prior occupancy, French loyalists argued, was unrealistic and historically illegitimate. You might as well try, it was argued, to give metropolitan France back to the Gauls.⁸ Clearly, the difference between the two groups was that the Melanesian tribes of New Caledonia, unlike the Celtic tribes of Gaul, had not receded into history. For all its internal divisions, and in the face of French cultural dominance, New Caledonia's indigenous Melanesian population had managed to form its own ethnic identity. In the 1980s the rising claims to self-determination of the Kanak majority of the Melanesian population could not simply be ignored in Paris. Both Socialist and liberal-conservative reforms constituted responses, of greater or lesser advantage as the case may have been, to the activism of the FLNKS.

The spirit, if not the letter, of the French Constitution, required that Kanak claims be heeded, although assessed according to formal democratic

criteria. From 1981 President Mitterrand and Socialist Governments were constrained to act according to the dictates of French constitutional law. While reform attempts were made, in the face of RPCR opposition, to improve the disadvantaged material and social situation of Kanaks, the requirements of the Constitution had to be observed. These elements provided the basis for Socialist Government refusals to respond to Kanak demands for immediate independence through a restricted self-determination vote likely to result in a majority poll for secession. Instead in Paris the preference of the electoral majority had to be recognised, whether with reservations on the part of Socialist Governments, or more enthusiastically by the Chirac Government.

Under constitutional criteria, the foremost sign of the legitimacy of French sovereignty over the Pacific TOM was that their populations were French by choice thanks to local majority votes for adherence to the Fifth Republic in the self-determination referenda held in September 1958 in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia, and in December 1959 in Wallis and Futuna. Since then, no nationalist movement in any of these three TOM had commanded the majority following of the local electorate necessary to lead the way to independence. As an anonymous writer for the High Commission in Nouméa pointed out in August 1980:

La France reste en Nouvelle-Calédonie parce que telle est la volonté, à plusieurs reprises réaffirmée, de ses habitants. En 1958, les électeurs calédoniens ont approuvé massivement, par référendum, la Constitution de la Vème République française [...] Ce choix de la population calédonienne ne s'est jamais démenti.⁹

This observation was reiterated by Cheysson when he addressed the National Assembly on French South Pacific policy in November 1981. He concurred in stating that the legitimacy of the French Pacific presence rested on "le vœu librement exprimé des populations des territoires".¹⁰ This legitimacy was reaffirmed in the case of New Caledonia in the territorial self-determination referendum of 1987.

The agitation of the FLNKS in 1984 and 1985 led to speculation by liberal and conservative French politicians that New Caledonian independence might push the first of a series of toppling French dominoes in the remaining DOM-TOM.¹¹ The decolonisation of the New Hebrides in 1980s had already set a precedent of sorts in the South Pacific, although as a Franco-British Condominium it had been a special case. In 1984 and 1985 the RPR and the UDF sounded the alarm over the contemplation of the issue of New Caledonian independence, accusing the Fabius Government of leading a policy of abandonment in the DOM-TOM.

Should New Caledonian independence be won, it was asserted, a chain of events could be set in motion which would diminish France's status as a great power. Not only members of the Opposition professed to be concerned about the implications of possible decolonisation. Calling into question the correctness of the UDF and RPR assertion that all members of the Fabius Government were in favour of decolonisation, Hernu lent official credence to the domino theory when he stated in April 1985: "Ce n'est pas que la défense de la Nouvelle-Calédonie qui est en cause, c'est aussi la Guyane et la Polynésie".¹² The Pisani Plan responded to such concerns by preserving vestiges of French sovereignty over New Caledonia in the unlikely eventuality that it acceded to a form of independence in association with France. Although the Fabius Government was concerned with the maintenance of the French global presence, it did not succeed in reassuring its opponents concerning this point. In January 1985, shortly after the announcement of the Pisani Plan, Chaban-Delmas declared to an RPR meeting in Bordeaux that decolonisation in New Caledonia could spread and threaten the standing of France as a nuclear, global power:

Si la France disparaît de la Nouvelle-Calédonie, ce ne sera pas seulement la Nouvelle-Calédonie qui partira, ce sera ensuite la Polynésie [française]. Or, c'est le seul centre d'essai souterrain nucléaire possible pour la France. C'est la théorie des dominos qui se met en place. La Nouvelle-Calédonie entraîne la Polynésie [française] et la France disparaît. Vos enfants seront de pauvres petits enfants de rien de tout, après l'an 2000 car, si la France cesse d'être une puissance nucléaire, elle cesse d'être une puissance tout court.¹³

This conjecture represented more the individual reaction of an old-guard Gaullist than an expression of RPR policy. It should be noted that, at this time, Chirac, Pons and Jacques Toubon, then the Secretary-General of the RPR, did not argue that Socialist policy in New Caledonia would lead to a succession of toppling dominoes in the rest of the DOM-TOM. The scenario presented by Chaban-Delmas was in any case unrealistically alarmist.

Chaban-Delmas voiced an extreme, unofficial reaction to the question of decolonisation: that the world standing of France might be diminished by the loss of any further territories. The possibility of the loss of French territory through internal nationalist campaigning was, like projections about the Soviet threat to the French Pacific, an illusory menace. In 1985, the dominant parties in both New Caledonia and French Polynesia opposed independence. The RPCR controlled the territorial electoral majority in New Caledonia, while Tahoeraa Huiraatira enjoyed political dominance in French Polynesia. Certain conservatives in the metropolitan French Opposition held that the attention the FLNKS was receiving through negotiations with Pisani and the formulation of reforms to meet some of its demands would serve to encourage the rise of nationalist movements elsewhere in the DOM-TOM. A Conference of the Last of the French Colonies, held on Guadeloupe from 5 to 7 April 1985, and attended by nationalist delegations from all the DOM-TOM except Wallis and Futuna and Saint Pierre and Miquelon, appeared to offer confirmation of the impression that nationalist movements were being encouraged by events in New Caledonia.¹⁴ In the National Assembly on 3 April 1985, Michel Debré called for the meeting to be banned. Pierre Joxe, then Minister of the Interior, replied by saying that he had no recourse to law to ban a private meeting, although he expressed disapproval of it.¹⁵ A decolonising domino effect did not materialise as a threat to the DOM-TOM. Of all the nationalist parties in the DOM-TOM, the FLNKS was the one with the proportionately largest following on its home ground.¹⁶ Both the FLNKS and its counterparts elsewhere in the DOM-TOM commanded insufficient electoral backing to achieve independence through a majority vote in a referendum, assuming that Paris would have been prepared to undertake such an exercise in the case of the DOM. Like the spectre of Soviet expansionism, New Caledonian independence was an illusory prospect exploited by members of the Opposition as political capital in metropolitan French debate. That same image of independence was exploited even more in the context of political debate by South Pacific leaders, although for regional motives diametrically opposed to the French Republicanism of individuals such as Chaban-Delmas and Debré, as will be discussed in the following section on the campaigning of the the South Pacific Forum.

Claims by members of the Opposition in Paris that the power of the Fifth Republic would have been seriously damaged by the loss of its Pacific territories were contentious in other respects. Militarily, France did not stand to lose a great deal through the loss of New Caledonia. Despite government and opposition declarations of their strategic worth, the islands had not been a major military base since US forces had used them in World War II. The partial and short-lived militarisation of New Caledonia in the 1980s was more a response to internal unrest than a sign of the strategic value of the islands. The loss of French Polynesia would have been more significant due to the presence of the CEP. If possible, any relocation of the test facilities would have involved great expense.

Moreover, France would not have been greatly affected economically by the loss of New Caledonia or French Polynesia. As Jean-Christophe Victor pointed out in 1990, New Caledonia and Polynesia contributed almost nothing to the French state budget, whereas the yearly public funds transfer from metropolitan France to New Caledonia amounted to about 2,500MFF. The figure was almost double that amount for French Polynesia. Considering the populations of the two territories, this was a disproportionately heavy level of expenditure, although these figures combined were the equivalent of less than 1% of the annual national budget.¹⁷ Setting aside geostrategic arguments and constitutional considerations, fiscal pragmatists could argue that a marginal saving would be made in state spending if the Pacific TOM were no longer components of the Republic.

The natural resources of the Pacific TOM were usually pointed to by French political leaders as adequate justification for continued French sovereignty there. Yet apart from New Caledonian nickel reserves, little else in the way of natural resources had been exploited in the Pacific TOM by the 1980s. The value of mineral resources on the ocean floors surrounding the three territories had not been established, and whatever might be found there was not yet commercially viable to extract. While nickel had been proclaimed by the Billotte law of 1969 to be a national strategic resource for France because of its uses in the armaments industry, by the 1980s very little New Caledonian nickel was being used by France for this purpose. In 1985 for example, 97% of New Caledonian nickel was exported, not to metropolitan France, but to Japan.¹⁸ Canada and other suppliers, geographically closer to metropolitan France than New Caledonia, could supply nickel cheaper thanks to lower freight overheads.¹⁹

Victor concluded with regard to the purported necessity of the Pacific TOM for the maintenance of France's standing as a global power: "Whether it is true or not is more a question of faith or perception than a calculation of figures".²⁰ This faith was based on a long-term strategic view in Paris that valued the future potential that the Pacific TOM offered. However in the past, the potential of other French possessions had not been realised. A French economic historian, Jacques Marseille, had come to this conclusion in response to the larger question of whether the French colonial empire contributed to France's economic strength as a great power. In 1984, his *Empire colonial et capitalisme français* challenged both the French colonialist and Marxist theory that the acquisition of a global empire contributed to national economic growth through the exploitation of resources for use in the metropole. At the height of its economic power, the colonial empire was the largest trading partner of metropolitan France, although Marseille insisted that its influence should not be overestimated. In 1928, when the colonial empire acceded to this status, trade with the colonies comprised 12.7% of French imports and 17.3% of its exports, and thus constituted a small relative majority of national external trade overall.²¹ Marseille found that economic expansion in the French colonial empire was artificially supported through government subsidies and protectionist measures against foreign goods on the metropolitan French market. Rather than contributing to French national economic growth, colonial trade held it back, as French Governments preferred to develop dealings with the colonies in preference to opening more profitable new markets in foreign nations. To the contrary of predictions of France's economic ruin upon decolonisation in the 1950s, the Fifth Republic experienced a period of rapid economic growth after the loss of French African and Asian domains.²² Marseille wrote in 1993:

la perte de l'Empire n'a pas affecté la croissance de l'économie française. Mieux, on peut même soutenir l'hypothèse qu'elle l'a stimulée. Car si l'Empire était il y a trente années le premier client de la France, c'était un client tout à fait

particulier qui payait ses achats et équilibrait son budget avec les dons que lui versait la métropole.²³

Clearly the possession of overseas dominions was not a condition of the economic well-being of the nation. There are strong grounds for the application of these conclusions to the economic relationship between metropolitan France and the Pacific TOM, as well as to the relationship of the former with the DOM-TOM in general. In the 1980s the DOM-TOM, like the French colonial empire before them, possessed economies heavily dependent on subsidies and technical assistance from the French State. Only with difficulty could they be characterised as anything except a financial burden, however minor, to the state budget.

Formal democratic considerations dictated by the Constitution, and the influence of geostrategic arguments asserting the long-term value of the DOM-TOM, determined much of the outlook of French Governments since 1981 on the issue of the decolonisation of the Pacific TOM. A component of the defence of French sovereignty in the South Pacific resided in unwillingness to have what was considered an internal affair the subject of political declarations by foreign governments. In response to a question from Lafleur which observed that South Pacific Forum lobbying on New Caledonia was inadmissible, Cheysson, Foreign Minister to Mauroy and Fabius, agreed. He outlined the position of the Fabius Government in November 1984:

*La France ne reconnaît au Forum des Etats du Pacifique Sud aucun droit de regard sur les affaires qui relèvent de sa seule souveraineté. [...] Les relations que nous entretenons avec chacun des Etats océaniques nous fournissent l'occasion de rappeler à nos interlocuteurs notre refus de toute ingérence et de dissiper, dans le même temps, incompréhensions et malentendus.*²⁴

However much the PS and the RPR may have disagreed on the appropriate measures to take to remedy New Caledonia's problems, they were in accord on the point that as an internal aspect of French government policy it was none of the business of Forum members. In the 1980s French Governments, whether Socialist or not, displayed irritation over official foreign statements concerning self-determination, particularly in times of civil unrest in New Caledonia. This irritation was expressed in various ways, which affected, although not durably, French relations with South Pacific states, and which demonstrated a mental gulf between attitudes in Paris and in the region.

On 27 November 1984, during the first FLNKS active boycott, Bill Hayden, the Australian Foreign Minister, declared on behalf of the Hawke Government that New Caledonia was "one of the last vestiges of colonialism in the South Pacific".²⁵ The following day Peter Curtis, the Australian Ambassador to Paris, was summoned to the Quai d'Orsay. He was informed by Michel Combal, Director for Asia and Pacific Affairs, of the astonishment of the Fabius Government over Hayden's comment about New Caledonia, and was told that the future of New Caledonia was a domestic French matter of no concern to Australia.²⁶ Some unofficial reactions came from the RPR too. In January 1985, Toubon sent a letter to the Australian Ambassador in Paris expressing the discontent of the RPR with comments by the Hawke Government on New Caledonia, in effect telling it to mind its own business.²⁷

These early indicators showed that the RPR shared the Socialist position of rejection of the right of foreign governments to comment negatively about New Caledonian affairs. At the time of the Ouvéa troubles from late April to early May 1988, the Chirac Government became annoyed with statements by New Zealand Labour Government Ministers. On 27 April 1988 Judith Trotter, then New Zealand Ambassador to Paris, was the recipient of remonstrations from the Secretary-General of the Quai d'Orsay after Lange had made disapproving comments at a press conference in London on Chirac's handling of

New Caledonia.²⁸ French discontent was expressed at a higher level in Paris from April to May 1988. Reacting from Wellington, Russell Marshall, the New Zealand Foreign Minister, asserted on 30 April that the Chirac Government was responsible for the implementation of overly colonialist, repressive policies in New Caledonia which were reminiscent of the French response to Algerian independence claims.²⁹ On 2 May Jean-Bernard Raimond, the French Foreign Minister, described Marshall's comment on New Caledonia as constituting an "ingérence intolérable" in French affairs.³⁰

The reaction of French Governments in response to the claim of any South Pacific government to speak on New Caledonian affairs did not stop official regional comments. The position of the Australian and New Zealand Labour administrations was that they were justified in speaking on New Caledonia due to the relative geographical proximity of their countries to the territory. The Hawke Government responded to French complaints in late November 1984 by stating that Australia had the right to comment on affairs that affected regional security in the South-West Pacific.³¹

The New Zealand Labour Government responded in similar terms. As Fran Wilde, then Associate Foreign Minister, indicated in Nouméa in October 1987: "La France donne son opinion sur les problèmes européens. Pourquoi la Nouvelle-Zélande ne le ferait-elle pas sur le Pacifique? Nous sommes océaniens. Nous appartenons à une communauté régionale. Il est normal que nous fassions entendre notre voix."³² Wilde's analogy was false. France did not comment on internal Spanish, German or Italian problems. French politicians saw no comparison between their commentaries on European affairs and South Pacific leaders' commentaries on New Caledonian affairs. France had the right to comment on the former due to its membership of the EC and the growing interdependence of its community partners. No such formal political partnership existed between Paris and the South Pacific Forum. France had policy aspirations in the direction of regional integration with the South Pacific, but they did not extend to allowing the Forum to advise it on New Caledonian policy. The Forum could not consistently exclude New Caledonia and French Polynesia from its ranks and still assert the right to involve itself in their internal affairs.

The Chirac Government weathered foreign criticisms about New Caledonian policy less passively than the Fabius Government had. Michel Debré, as noted earlier, had been hostile to the Hawke Government since 1983, acting on the assumption that it was the leader of regional criticisms of France. Chirac picked up the arguments of Debré to some extent. On 26 August 1987, at an RPR youth section meeting at Arles, Chirac similarly accused Australia and New Zealand of leading "une politique de déstabilisation de notre pays".³³

Chirac appealed to a suspicion harboured by French conservatives. Regional critiques of the French presence reinforced the central suspicion subscribed to by followers of a theory to explain anti-French sentiment in the South Pacific. Certain French figures of the Right had chosen to portray regional opposition to the French South Pacific presence in a fashion which could best be described as an Anglo-Saxon Protestant conspiracy theory. According to the exponents of this theory, opposition to aspects of the French presence in the zone represented evidence of a Francophobic hangover from Anglo-French colonial rivalries of the nineteenth century. Although Britain had decolonised the region by the 1980s, the independent states it had left behind retained an adversarial mentality inherited from their former colonial master. Their ultimate goal was asserted to be the eviction of France from the South Pacific, so that Anglo-Saxon Protestant dominance could be asserted over New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia, resulting in a united culture stretching from Australia to Canada.³⁴

In 1986 and 1987, such disquietude was acted upon. On 19 December 1986, following disparaging comments from Hawke and his colleagues about

the conduct of New Caledonian policy, the Australian Ambassador in Paris was informed by Raimond that the Chirac Government had decided to suspend ministerial contacts between the two countries. On 5 January 1987, Raimond's office issued a declaration confirming the measure. It made reference to:

la décision du gouvernement français de suspendre, pour une période indéterminée, toute échange [interministérielle] entre l'Australie et la France, compte tenu de l'attitude inamicale du gouvernement australien au cours des derniers mois en ce qui concerne la politique française dans le Pacifique Sud et en particulier s'agissant de la Nouvelle-Calédonie. [...] l'Australie n'a cessé de mener, pendant cette période, une campagne systématique contre la politique française malgré la volonté de dialogue et les efforts d'explication des autorités françaises.³⁵

Patient explanation having proven inadequate, Paris had resorted to more vigorous measures. Hayden regretted the French decision, although any apology that might have been expected was not forthcoming from the Hawke Government, which claimed to be mystified as to why the action had been taken.³⁶ Canberra was playing the part of a provocative *ingénue*.

Five days later the Quai d'Orsay announced the expulsion from New Caledonia of John Dauth, the Australian Consul-General, for purported interference in local politics.³⁷ Dauth's error, the Quai d'Orsay asserted, had been to establish overly friendly contacts with Kanak political groups. Dauth had dispensed Australian aid funding to Kanak groups, and had held meetings with Kanak political leaders. Dauth responded that the High Commission had been notified of the aid, which consisted of 30,000FF for a school bus, 20,000FF for the Kanak cultural centre at Hienghène, and 5,000FF for a Catholic aid group to assist in cyclone recovery work. Moreover, similar Australian funding to Kanak groups had been going on throughout the 1980s. As for Dauth's meetings with Kanak political leaders, these were stated to be a normal part of his diplomatic duties, and were complemented by his meetings with French loyalist leaders.³⁸ The expulsion appeared unjustified on the level of the Quai d'Orsay's complaint that Dauth had been aiding and abetting Kanak nationalism, although it was consistent with the suspension of ministerial exchanges. It is more likely that Dauth was being used as the object of French discontent with broader Australian "interference" over New Caledonia, including its lobbying at the UN in December 1986, which will be discussed further below.

French subscribers to the Anglo-Saxon conspiracy theory were in fact hard put to find evidence of material support for FLNKS militants from South Pacific governments. Dauth's distribution of aid for a school bus, cultural purposes and cyclone recovery work did not constitute striking evidence of succour for Kanak activism. In September 1987, while visiting New Caledonia, Chirac accused Australia and New Zealand of searching to destabilise France's South Pacific presence through support for the FLNKS.³⁹ Other than paper protests and lobbying at the UN, proof to lend weight to this accusation was difficult to find. There was some evidence of official funding for the FLNKS that could be viewed as political in intent, but it was not substantial. For example, in July 1985, the New Zealand Labour Government funded a visit to Wellington by Tjibaou.⁴⁰ Lange denied that his Government had supplied aid to the FLNKS,⁴¹ although paying for its president's air fares represented a minor contradiction of this assertion.

The most overt campaigning for the FLNKS in Australia and New Zealand came from non-governmental bodies. In 1985 Australian church groups and teachers' unions had been active in raising funds for the Kanak Popular Schools.⁴² In January 1985, the Australian Federation of Secondary Teachers had raised the equivalent of 75,000FF to assist the FLNKS in setting up its own press.⁴³ Roland Jacquard, a reporter for *Le Point*, attempted to portray New Zealand non-governmental aid for Kanak education as evidence of the veracity

of Chirac's theory. After sounding a warning by making vague, unsubstantiated reference to purported Libyan and Soviet destabilisation, he quoted a letter dated 4 June 1986. The letter had been written by David Small, a representative of CORSO, a private New Zealand aid agency, and discussed a donation of \$NZ7,000 for the Kanak schools. Jacquard then made reference to the presence of an FLNKS office in Sydney, and to the financial support of Australian trade unions for the Front.⁴⁴ The article was sensationalist. The only specific example of aid mentioned, whether Australian or New Zealand, was not of an illegal nature. While revelations of money for Kanak arms trafficking would have been more convincing in affirming allegations of a foreign conspiracy, no evidence for such close links has been found. Nor is there reason to suggest it exists. Non-governmental support for the FLNKS similar to that of private New Zealand and Australian agencies was offered by private French groups in the 1980s, including the pacifist Larzac Foundation, and the Association of Information and Support for the Rights of the Kanak People among others.⁴⁵ The activities of these organisations tended to dispell the impression that support for the FLNKS was limited to the so-called Anglo-Saxons of the South Pacific, even if these French groups contained Protestant supporters.

Franco-Australian ministerial contacts were unofficially resumed on 26 September 1987, when Raimond met Hayden in New York to discuss South Pacific issues.⁴⁶ They were officially restored when André Giraud, then Defence Minister, attended the Australian bicentenary celebrations in February 1988 as the French representative.⁴⁷ The importance of the differences between the Chirac Government and the Hawke Government should not be overestimated. Sub-ministerial contacts between Paris and Canberra continued during the suspension of interministerial relations, and it could be argued that the French suspension was largely diplomatic window-dressing. Neither Paris nor Canberra wished to leave their spat unresolved for too long. The halt of ministerial exchanges had been a nuisance for Australia, which had planned talks with French Ministers over European trade for 1987.⁴⁸ To allow relations with France to deteriorate during a period of economic depression might have been damaging for the national economy.⁴⁹ For its part, the Chirac Government, while discontented, did not desire a complete break in relations with Canberra. Prior to taking retaliatory measures, Raimond had outlined the governmental position in the National Assembly on 17 November 1986. He noted French discord with Australia and the South Pacific Forum over New Caledonia, but declared:

Toutefois, notre politique dans cette région vise à approfondir le dialogue avec l'ensemble de nos partenaires et voisins [...]. Il convient de souligner, à cet égard, que l'Australie est un pays influent dans la région, un allié avec lequel nous entretenons des relations politiques suivies, des échanges économiques substantiels et une coopération culturelle scientifique et technique bénéfique, tant pour la France et l'Australie que pour l'ensemble des Etats du Pacifique.⁵⁰

To continue a suspension of ministerial contacts for more than a few months would have been contrary to the long-term French policy of South Pacific integration, which had been supported by successive governments in Paris since the 1970s.

That Franco-Australian differences over New Caledonia were not allowed to develop too far calls into question the extent of division between Paris and Canberra in 1986 and 1987. Regardless of Chirac's hostile comments about Australia, and Hawke⁵¹ differences were not allowed to become irreparable. Certainly no personal animosity seemed to exist on the part of Chirac or Hawke. On 19 June 1989 during a visit to Paris on the eve of the French bicentenary celebration of the French Revolution, Chirac and Hawke

had what the latter described as an amicable meeting. As Mayor of Paris, Chirac received Hawke to accept an Australian gift to the city, a bust of La Pérouse.⁵²

Negative comments on the political stance of the Australian and New Zealand Governments by RPR leaders were also partly motivated by demagoguery. Such statements appealed to patriotic conservative voters in metropolitan France and to French loyalists in the Pacific TOM. Caldoche loyalists held as an article of faith that Australia and New Zealand aimed to extend 'Anglo-Saxon' influence over New Caledonia. The fact that for most of the 1980s these two countries were led by Labour Governments sympathetic to the FLNKS aggravated this suspicion.⁵³ From 1982 to 1985 Australophobia was evident in the physical harassment and death threats made by French loyalists to Helen Fraser, the only Australian journalist permanently present in the territory.⁵⁴ In 1987 the RPCR approved of the expulsion of Dauth, stating it was a good lesson for Canberra.⁵⁵

Wellington and Canberra, of course, rejected the accusation that they were pursuing nationalistic interests in supporting New Caledonian self-determination. Hawke's reply to the thesis was:

It is nonsense and a palpable nonsense. [...] I and my government have our hands completely full in conducting the affairs of Australia and in handling, within the limit of economic resources, the amount of aid that we were able to make available to the countries of the region. We have neither ambition nor capacity to take the place of France in the region. And I must say that any view that we want to do that is both a misapprehension and if I may say so borders on the paranoic.⁵⁶

While betraying a predilection for giving advice where it was not wanted, neither Canberra nor Wellington had designs on New Caledonia in the 1980s. Certain French commentators have been more moderate than members of the French Right in their assessment of Australian foreign policy in the South Pacific. They have more plausibly indicated that expansionist designs were beyond Canberra's financial means, and that there existed no great public interest in such a goal.⁵⁷ The same arguments applied to a greater extent to New Zealand.

Another French position related to the sentiment that South Pacific nations were not justified in passing judgement on ethnic problems in New Caledonia, was the belief that they were hypocritical in doing so. Australia and New Zealand were former colonies where massive European immigration had marginalised indigenous identity to a far greater extent than French settlement had done in New Caledonia or in the other Pacific TOM. Defending the New Caledonian policy of the Chirac Government from accusations of colonialism in the UN General Assembly on 2 December 1986 Claude de Kemoularia, the French representative, riposted with an attack on the state of inter-ethnic relations in Australia and New Zealand.⁵⁸ Chirac, at Arles on 26 August 1987, accused Australia and New Zealand of hypocrisy in venturing to comment on New Caledonia when they too had internal ethnic problems stemming from their colonial histories.⁵⁹ Although Pons refrained from naming countries, he had employed the same argument on 8 November 1986 when addressing the National Assembly on the matter of South Pacific Forum lobbying at the UN.⁶⁰ On 2 December 1986 Charles Pasqua, speaking as Minister of the Interior, declared at the time of South Pacific Forum lobbying in the UN on New Caledonia :

Nous [le gouvernement français] n'avons aucune leçon à recevoir de l'Australie et de la Nouvelle-Zélande, ni sur le plan de la démocratie ni sur le plan de la civilisation. Il est clair que les problèmes d'indépendance des indigènes australiens et néo-zélandais ont été réglés, il y a très longtemps, à leur manière, par les Australiens et les Néo-Zélandais.⁶¹

Pasqua was alluding to repressive colonial policies which had extended to the point of genocide in the nineteenth century. The underlying message of such comments was that Australia and New Zealand should resolve their own ethnic problems before venturing to pass judgement on those of France in New Caledonia, and that they were ill-equipped, both politically and morally, to extend such judgement.

Of all the members of the South Pacific Forum, Australia was a prime target for French critiques. The treatment meted out to Australian Aborigines since the beginnings of British colonisation had been particularly brutal, and the indigenous population was still a disadvantaged minority in the 1980s. In an interview with TF1 on 16 December 1984, Mitterrand criticised disparaging Australian commentaries referring to unjust French colonialism in New Caledonia, considering them singularly inappropriate if the number of Aborigines killed in the name of British colonialism was taken into account.⁶² In February 1988 Giraud responded to Australian surprise that France should be displeased with South Pacific lobbying at the UN by asking:

Imagine the French Ambassador at the UN writing a letter to everybody trying to make an issue of [the Aborigines] and putting it on the list of decolonisation because in the Northern Territory of Australia you have about the same percentage of Aborigines that we have Melanesians in New Caledonia. Would your Government be happy?⁶³

This scenario was not implausible. By the 1990s, the Aborigines of Australia had moved beyond claiming land rights and were contemplating seeking self-determination, in much the same way as Kanaks had in the late 1970s. In May 1993 Bob Weatherall, the Queensland leader of the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, declared that if Australia was going to become a Republic, Aborigines should be granted the right to a self-determination vote to ascertain whether they wanted to join or regain their own sovereignty.⁶⁴ In October 1993, it was reported that Torres Strait Islanders had hopes of forming a self-governing territory by 2001.⁶⁵ Aboriginal leaders may yet seek UN support for their claims.

French critics have had ample material to back their claim that, taking into consideration the heritage of oppression of Aborigines, white Australians were hypocritical in advising France how to solve ethnic and political problems in New Caledonia. The policy of genocide in the nineteenth century which led to the eventual eradication of Tasmania's aboriginal population was more brutal than the colonial repression practised by the French against tribal insurgents in New Caledonia.⁶⁶ Injustices to Aborigines persisted beyond the colonial period. Aborigines were not accorded the full civil rights that non-indigenous Australians enjoyed by law until 1967.⁶⁷ The question of indigenous land rights has been just as divisive in Australia as in New Caledonia. Aboriginal tribes lost huge tracts of their tribal domains to British colonisers, who did not recognise any prior right of ownership resultant from the status of Aborigines as the original inhabitants of the continent. It was not until 1992 that the Australian High Court declared, with what became known as the Mabo High Court ruling, that Aborigines, as the original inhabitants of Australia, had prior rights of occupation. The decision called into question the legality of land titles issued by State Governments to private companies as they had not taken into consideration indigenous title.⁶⁸ The Mabo ruling opened up to Aborigines the prospect of claiming title over all Crown land in Australia. Aboriginal land claims followed. In 1993 the Australian Government still had a long period of confrontation ahead of it over the question of the role of Aborigines in the transplanted immigrant society which had become culturally dominant over the two centuries since Britain had proclaimed sovereignty over the continent.

When asked in March 1987 by a reporter from *Le Monde* if Australia's relations with the Aborigines could be compared to France's problems with the Kanaks, Hayden's defensive response was "I don't see how it compares at all".⁶⁹ Avoiding blatant historical parallels such as the fact that the European immigrant societies in New Caledonia and in Australia were both founded largely by transportation, and that the colonisation of New Caledonia and of Australia had alienated indigenous populations from their land, Hayden preferred to indicate how much the Australian Government was doing to improve the welfare of Aborigines and how much their situation had improved since World War II. However he could not deny that Aborigines were disadvantaged compared to the non-indigenous majority in Australia. When questioned on the matter in January 1987, Hawke stated that the situation of the Australian Aborigines was different from that of Kanaks in New Caledonia because Australia was a sovereign nation and New Caledonia was not.⁷⁰ It was an indisputable but fine distinction, ignoring the parallel that legally New Caledonia was a component of a larger sovereign entity, in much the same way as the Torres Strait Islands were part of the Australian Commonwealth. Australian leaders such as Hawke and Hayden were not very convincing in their defensive arguments. They seemed to dislike being confronted with the ambiguity of their self-proclaimed authority to give pointers to the French on decolonisation. As the leaders of a state established upon the imposed legitimacy of British sovereignty over Australia, they did not enjoy a position of moral superiority over the French on colonial matters.

Similar arguments could be applied to New Zealand in the 1980s. The legacy of British colonialism there was far from being resolved. State recognition of Maori claims to land and other natural resources under the Treaty of Waitangi represented one of the major political issues of the decade. Maori language and culture had been in decline until the 1970s, due to the dominance of English culture. Only belatedly was recognition given to indigenous culture by the state education system. Lange and other Pakeha New Zealand Government Ministers were as much the leaders of a state founded on an imposed legitimacy as their Australian counterparts were. The misfortune of the Caldoches perhaps, was not to have been as successful in eroding the identity of New Caledonian Melanesians as white Australians had been in marginalising the Aborigines, and New Zealand Pakeha were in culturally dominating the Maoris.

That the nations of the South Pacific Forum were selective in their pronouncements on decolonisation provided further grounds for French observations of hypocrisy. In September 1988 Pierre Lellouche, then deputy director of the French Institute of International Relations, and an advisor to Chirac, asked why it was that Australia freely passed comment on the French in New Caledonia while hesitating to criticise Indonesian suppression of indigenous peoples such as the Melanesians of Irian Jaya, and the East Timorese.⁷¹ Australian Governments have repeatedly avoided confronting Indonesia over its atrocious human rights record, and have failed to support the decolonisation claims of East Timorese nationalists since the Indonesian invasion of their nation in 1975.⁷² Australian unwillingness to aggravate a large, undemocratic, occasionally aggressive state is related to fears that such action could provoke border tensions, lead to a loss of Australian trade, and hinder developing wider Australian links with Asia. Lellouche rightly pointed out the selective morality of the Australian Government. Expressions of support for Melanesian nationalism by Papua New Guinea have also involved selective morality. Compared to its comments condemning French treatment of the FI and later the FLNKS in New Caledonia, Port Moresby has been reluctant to condemn the situation of Melanesians in Irian Jaya. Papua New Guinea does not wish to aggravate border tensions with Indonesia.⁷³

The South Pacific Forum in general could be accused of selective morality over its willingness since the 1980s to pass judgement on French

domestic policy in New Caledonia. Far more restraint was demonstrated by the Forum when certain of its own members were confronted with internal unrest stemming from ethnic divisions and undemocratic responses to them. The Forum avoided criticising the Fijian coups by Rabuka in 1987,⁷⁴ and has been hesitant to embroil itself in the problems experienced by Papua New Guinea with nationalists on the island of Bougainville since 1989, even when that conflict spread to border clashes with the Solomon Islands.⁷⁵ A major barrier to the arbitration of the internal and international disputes over Bougainville has been the insistence of Port Moresby that the conflict was an internal matter.⁷⁶ Thus Papua New Guinea adopted an argument which had been voiced by France over New Caledonia. Cautious to preserve its unity, the Forum has been more willing to embroil itself in France's domestic problems in the Pacific TOM than in the internal unrest of its own members.

The Forum Mobilises

The previous section established the differing attitudes of French and South Pacific governments concerning the adherence of the Pacific TOM to the Fifth Republic. Although France rejected claims by the Forum and its members expressing support for the decolonisation of New Caledonia and, more rarely, French Polynesia, from the late 1970s till 1988 it was largely unpersuasive in deflecting such regional commentary. In this and the following section the course of French diplomatic efforts to justify and explain French sovereignty over the Pacific TOM in the face of regional opposition is charted. Through this examination, the extent to which the question of decolonisation affected French foreign relations in the South Pacific is assessed.

As decolonisation was an issue raised by South Pacific leaders at the prompting of indigenous nationalists in the French Pacific, preliminary attention must accordingly be devoted to wider regional policy on decolonisation so as to understand the context of debate between the South Pacific Forum and Paris. While the French defence of the Republic's sovereignty over the Pacific TOM was motivated by a concern for constitutional demands, by an unwillingness to act against local electoral majorities opposed to independence, and by the maintenance of its standing as a global power into the twenty-first century, South Pacific leaders exhibited contrary political predilections stemming from a different political culture. With the exception of Vanuatu leaders, independent governments in the region in the 1980s had had neither prior experience with, nor could plausibly claim any great understanding of, French democratic institutions.

For example, Hayden unrealistically suggested in January 1982 that the Mauroy Government should "declare a firm target date for independence - preferably one within five years - just as quickly as possible".⁷⁷ In the absence of majority support for this option among the New Caledonian electorate, the Mauroy Government could not do this. Hayden was either blasé about, or ignorant of, the French constitutional dimension as well as the New Caledonian electoral dimension. He described the argument that the minority status of Kanaks prevented such a declaration as "spurious". He incorrectly asserted that by the end of the 1980s Melanesians would once again represent a majority of the territorial population, and might as well be given independence sooner than later.⁷⁸ This argument was in itself spurious, as Melanesian population increase in the 1980s would not affect voting patterns until the late 1990s or the 2000s, when the new generation would attain voting age, and by that time there would be no guarantee they would all be adherents to the cause of Kanak nationalism. Hayden also downplayed the importance of those he described as "French settlers", whom he said should "acknowledge the Kanak people's rights to determine the future of their own country".⁷⁹ This prospect was as likely as that

of white Australian settlers unconditionally surrendering their interests to Aboriginal nationalism.

The political cultures South Pacific politicians had inherited from their colonial pasts had been derived from British democratic values, which placed less store than French democracy in the observation of a formal written constitution. Regional leaders were ill-equipped to comprehend the French concern to observe constitutional demands over the matter of self-determination and, as in Hayden's case, were unrealistic or ill-informed in their assessment of certain political realities in the Pacific TOM. Again, with the exception of Vanuatu, their experience of British decolonisation compounded their incomprehension. Apart from Pitcairn Island, Britain had willingly ceded sovereignty to its possessions in the South Pacific, both because it no longer desired to assume the expense of their maintenance, and because local political leaders in each of these domains had been amenable to this evolution.

Regardless of the important difference that no such conjunction of interests existed in the case of the French Pacific, Anglophone politicians in the South Pacific assumed, consciously or unconsciously, that the British decolonisation scenario would be applicable there. Their assumption underestimated the preparedness of Paris to maintain its control of its remaining global possessions, as well as overestimating the strength of indigenous nationalism in the Pacific TOM. And while the leaders of Vanuatu understood all too well the priorities of French political values, and French resistance to decolonisation, for them French preoccupations were deemed to be of lesser significance than pan-Melanesian solidarity with New Caledonia's Kanaks.

Because of their own experiences of decolonisation, member states of the South Pacific Forum imagined that France would shortly follow the British example. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, French decolonisation of the South Pacific was considered by various regional leaders to be an historical inevitability. In 1979 Tom Davis, the Cook Islands Premier, optimistically predicted the total decolonisation of the South Pacific by 1985.⁸⁰ This was a tall order. Setting aside the French Pacific TOM, there was no indication in 1979, and there has been none since, that the United States was prepared to decolonise American Samoa, that Britain was cutting ties with Pitcairn Island, that Chile was prepared to renounce possession of Easter Island, that Australia intended to grant independence to Norfolk Island, or that New Zealand would abandon the Chatham Islands.

Regardless of the consideration that none of the other colonial powers in the South Pacific intended to renounce their island possessions in order to follow the British precedent, the *idée fixe* that France was on the verge of decolonising was expressed by the most conservative leaders in the Forum. Although Muldoon reacted unfavorably to suggestions that the Forum should lend immediate backing to Kanak nationalist claims, he portrayed French regional decolonisation as ultimately being ineluctable. At the South Pacific Forum held at Honiara in July 1979, he refused to back a motion tabled by Papua New Guinea calling for France to organise self-determination votes in French Polynesia and New Caledonia.⁸¹ At the Port Vila South Pacific Forum in August 1981, Muldoon only reluctantly went along with the majority support for a statement backing New Caledonian independence, thinking the motion was peripheral to the interests of the body.⁸² After a meeting in February 1983 with Muldoon in Wellington, Tjibaou, who had asked for New Zealand support for the FI, said of Muldoon: "Je le pensais défavorable à la revendication [kanake] de l'indépendance."⁸³ Notwithstanding his reluctance to have the Forum support indigenous nationalism in the Pacific TOM, Muldoon had declared in July 1979 that he thought the French Pacific would be decolonised by the year 2000.⁸⁴ In May 1981, he told New Zealand journalists that Mitterrand would accelerate what Muldoon had perceived as the process of French decolonisation in the Pacific that had supposedly been set in motion by the Franco-British withdrawal

from the New Hebrides.⁸⁵ Mitterrand informed Muldoon to the contrary at their meeting in Paris on 17 June 1981, that he had no intention of organising self-determination referenda in the Pacific TOM.⁸⁶ There had been no indication in territorial elections in the late 1970s that pro-independence support approaching that of an absolute majority of local electorates existed in any of the French TOM.

In spite of his conservatism on decolonisation issues, Muldoon subscribed to the theory that one day French decolonisation would occur. His successor was more fervent in this assumption. Just after his visit to New Caledonia from 6 to 7 October 1984, Lange conjectured confidently to the House of Representatives in Wellington: "That territory will be independent in a relatively short time".⁸⁷ In May 1986, heedless of evidence that the opposite might be the case, Lange described New Caledonian independence as "an irresistible tide".⁸⁸ By that time, the New Zealand Labour Government held that independence should be granted as soon as possible, but did not go so far as to recognise Kanak primacy in the manner that Vanuatu did.⁸⁹ The advocacy of indigenous rights above those of immigrants in New Caledonia would have been an undemocratic position difficult for the Lange Government to justify. As the authority of Lange's administration rested on a political system founded on the imposition of British colonialism, at the expense of Maori identity, such an undemocratic, pro-indigenous stance would have led to uneasy repercussions on the New Zealand domestic political scene. Since the independence of Vanuatu, Lini had pushed for Kanak sovereignty in New Caledonia, in accordance with the demands of the FI and later the FLNKS.⁹⁰

Like Vanuatu since 1980, the South Pacific Forum at the height of its support for the FLNKS from 1985 to 1988 was less interested in the minority level of territorial support for Kanak nationalism than in the unconditional recognition of Kanak demands for self-determination. This outlook was formulated in fulfilment of a collective assumption that regional decolonisation was inevitable, and that, as a part of that assumed trend, Kanak independence was both practicable and just. This position was prefigured by the Forum communiqué issued in July 1979:

Noting the desire of Pacific Island peoples, including those in the French territories, to determine their own future, the Forum reaffirmed its belief in the principle of self-determination and independence applying to all Pacific Island peoples in accordance with their freely expressed wishes.⁹¹

This motion was a moderated version of the original text proposed by Papua New Guinea, which specifically targeted the French Pacific, and was consistent with FI demands at the meeting. The term "all Pacific Islands peoples" went beyond reference to indigenous peoples due to the reservations of Australian, New Zealand and Fijian representatives. They could not adopt unqualified support for indigenous nationalism because non-indigenous inhabitants constituted absolute demographic majorities in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji.

That decolonisation issues were being discussed at the Forum in 1979 was partially attributable to the question of the impending independence of the New Hebrides. Yann Céléné Uregei, Naisseline and Tjibaou attended the Forum meeting to remind its members that the VP was not the only Melanesian party seeking independence from France. Before the meeting, a petition signed by leaders of the UC, Palika, the PSC, the UPM and FULK had been sent to the member delegations in Honiara. It asked the Forum to petition the UN decolonisation committee⁹² to list New Caledonia as a non-self-governing territory.⁹³ Such a UN move would have been of considerable assistance to the FI. It would have given international recognition to the political agenda of the Front and would have placed pressure on France to respond to FI calls for self-determination. Like the FI, the FLNKS canvassed Forum members for support.

After the foundation of the FLNKS in September 1984, Tjibaou made visits to Vanuatu, while Uregei, as his foreign minister, extensively toured the South Pacific soliciting support. Foreign recognition of the Kanak cause was considered by the FLNKS to be of great importance for the achievement of independence. In its founding charter it made "un appel aux Peuples frères du Pacifique [...] pour apporter leur soutien et leur aide à la lutte du Peuple Kanak."⁹⁴ The Hienghène congress of the FLNKS in May 1985 reiterated the earlier demands of the FI that the South Pacific Forum take its case to the UN.⁹⁵

The Forum resisted demands for this step until 1986, although it did directly lobby Paris over New Caledonia. On 13 March 1982 Mara led a delegation to Paris to press the issues of New Caledonian and French Polynesian self-determination. Mitterrand indicated that reforms were under way in response to Kanak demands. At the Rotorua meeting of the South Pacific Forum on 10 August 1982, Mara recommended that its members should constructively encourage steps toward decolonisation in New Caledonia by allowing the Socialist Government time to undertake the necessary reforms to this end.⁹⁶ The Forum outlined this position in its official communiqué, where it stated that it "urges the French Government to work closely with the Kanak people of New Caledonia in formulating a political programme for a peaceful transition to independence".⁹⁷ This 'wait and see' attitude persisted until the Forum's meeting in 1986. Forum communiqués in 1983, 1984 and 1985 backed Socialist reforms and the shortening of the self-determination timetable in the declared belief that independence was becoming a more likely prospect. While Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea were enthusiastic to offer more vigorous Forum support to the political agenda of their fellow Melanesians in New Caledonia through UN lobbying, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji were reluctant to lend their backing. Like Suva, Canberra and Wellington were confident that under Mitterrand a solution would be found to New Caledonian tensions without the need to resort to UN lobbying. Australia supported the New Caledonian reforms of Emanuelli,⁹⁸ Lemoine⁹⁹ and Pisani.¹⁰⁰ So too did Fiji¹⁰¹ and New Zealand.¹⁰² The position of these three countries was pivotal as they were the only Forum members with large enough diplomatic corps to effectively lobby UN members for a vote on the territory. The commitment of Australia, New Zealand and Fiji was also necessary for the maintenance of a platform of consensual agreement in the Forum.

Giraud, while in Australia in February 1988, accused the Labor Government of leading the South Pacific Forum's UN campaign over New Caledonia. He said the Chirac Government was "very much shocked that Australia was really leading an anti-French game in the UN corridors" and that its members could not understand "why Australia has been so active at the UN to bring on the international scene a delicate issue which we consider to be essentially internal".¹⁰³ Australia and New Zealand were not the originators of Forum support for New Caledonian decolonisation, although by 1986 they had inevitably become the ringleaders of this campaign. The Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu were the most vigorous supporters of Kanak nationalism at the Forum, but lacked the means to present New Caledonia's case effectively at the UN. The desire of Papua New Guinea to see the issue presented at the UN has already been noted, as has Vanuatu's close support for the positions of the FI and FLNKS. The Solomon Islands shared their positions on Kanak independence,¹⁰⁴ which were substantially different from the moderate stance of Fiji. In 1985 Mara declared that the concept of Kanak independence in New Caledonia was contrary to the multiracial principles that Fiji had been founded on.¹⁰⁵ After the Forum resolved in 1986 to take action at the UN, as founding members of the UN with extensive diplomatic networks, Australia and New Zealand conducted the bulk of Forum lobbying, along with Fiji, which happened to be on the UN decolonisation committee at the time. It

was this predominant Australian and New Zealand role in lobbying which aroused the ire of the Chirac Government.

A lack of Australian, New Zealand and Fijian confidence in the Chirac Government enabled the Forum's change of heart about going to the UN. This shift in stance was adopted officially at the meeting of the South Pacific Forum held in Suva from 8 to 11 August 1986. There Australia, New Zealand and Fiji abandoned support for French Government reforms. The Hawke Government was troubled by the appointment of Chirac. In May and in August 1986 Hayden had declared the Australian rejection of Pons's reform plans for New Caledonia, stating that the centralisation they envisaged was a retrograde step that would be antagonistic to Kanaks.¹⁰⁶ In August, Hawke warned Chirac that he was embarking on a dangerous, divisive course.¹⁰⁷ Lange shared Hawke's position,¹⁰⁸ while since the advent of Chirac, Mara had changed his mind about non-interference in New Caledonian affairs.¹⁰⁹ By 11 August 1986 all of the Forum's members except the Cook Islands were in favour of taking the New Caledonian case to the UN. Davis, who had arrived at the meeting just after holding discussions with Chirac on French assistance to the Cook Islands, at first suggested that the new administration in Paris be given the chance to prove itself. Other Forum members were unconvinced.¹¹⁰

The Forum communiqué declared:

While the Forum acknowledged that there were some positive aspects to the approach of the new French Government they did not, in its view, adequately recognise the aspirations of the Kanak people. In particular it noted that whereas the previous Government had appeared committed to a form of independence for New Caledonia the new Government appeared committed to New Caledonia remaining a territory of France. [...] the change in French policy towards New Caledonia over the previous year was a significant backward step.¹¹¹

Here the Forum simplified and possibly misread the positions of both the Fabius and the Chirac Governments. Under the self-determination conditions projected by the Fabius Government in 1985 it was by no means certain that New Caledonia would have attained independence in association with France. As the Chirac Government had not gone back on the previous administration's commitment to a self-determination vote, and as the conditions of that vote had at that stage not been finalised, it was perhaps premature to state that a significant backward step had taken place in the recognising the aspirations of the Kanak people.

It is significant that this Forum communiqué, unlike that of 1979, had an ethnic bias. "All Pacific Island peoples" had been succeeded by specific recognition of "the Kanak people", tacitly considered to be one and indivisible. In this regard, at the insistence of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and of Vanuatu, the South Pacific Forum had adopted the definition of the FLNKS. The past democratic concerns of Australia, New Zealand and Fiji were overridden. Although the Forum communiqué had earlier announced its concern for "the rights and interests of all inhabitants"¹¹² in New Caledonia, the reference to "the Kanak people" in the resolution demonstrated bias toward the Kanak section of the population. The declaration of August 1986 went on to announce that the Forum had decided to request the reinscription of New Caledonia on the UN list of non-self-governing territories, to ensure that the UN would monitor the situation there.

On 2 October 1986, Fiji informed the UN decolonisation committee of the Forum decision to pursue New Caledonia's case.¹¹³ The status of New Caledonia was special, in that it had already been on the list of non-self-governing territories. Although it was one of 74 such territories on the UN's first decolonisation list in 1946, the Fourth Republic had signalled its refusal to transmit information about New Caledonia since 1947, thus resulting in a lapsed

status. Governments of the Fifth Republic maintained their predecessors' position that New Caledonia, as a TOM, was an integral part of France with a large degree of self-administration which excluded it from qualifying for the UN list.¹¹⁴

On 2 December 1986, a motion was tabled at the UN General Assembly. It stated that New Caledonia qualified as a non-self-governing territory, that France was obliged to transmit information on New Caledonia to the UN and should cooperate with the UN decolonisation committee to this end, and announced the inalienable right of the New Caledonian people to independence. Here the UN resolution differed from the Forum communiqué of August 1986, which had accorded recognition to the rights of "the Kanak people". Kanak identity was thus subsumed by recognition of a larger group in the UN motion. The item, listed as General Assembly resolution 41/41A, was adopted with 89 votes for, 24 against and 34 abstentions.¹¹⁵ Among those in favour were Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the only Forum members with UN representation. France voted against, as did several of its former African colonies such as Chad, the Comoros, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal and Togo. It was asserted by Forum members at the UN that France had attempted to influence its former colonies on the vote. If this was the case it was not universally successful. Certain former French possessions voted for the motion: notably Algeria, Kampuchea, Laos, Madagascar and Vietnam. Others abstained, such as the Central African Republic, and Mali. Britain and the United States likewise abstained. As both countries retained overseas possessions from their days of colonial expansion, they were not prepared to call into question French sovereignty. Neither did they oppose the right of New Caledonians to accede to independence.¹¹⁶

The reaction of the Chirac Government, as outlined by the Quai d'Orsay on 3 December, was a total refusal to accept the recommendations of the resolution. The French rejection of "ingérence" was similar to that which it had already declared to South Pacific governments:

*La France ne répondra pas favorablement aux demandes de renseignements relatifs à la Nouvelle-Calédonie émanant du Comité de décolonisation aux Nations unies et n'y donnera aucune suite [...]. La France n'acceptera pas non plus la présence de missions ni d'observateurs sur place, dans le but de surveiller le déroulement du référendum prévu [...]. On estime [...] que l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies n'a pas à s'ingérer dans les affaires intérieures de la France d'autant [...] que c'est à la population calédonienne qu'il appartient de se prononcer sur son propre avenir, par voie de référendum.*¹¹⁷

The UN vote had in no way sought to predetermine the choice of the New Caledonian electorate, even though those who tabled the motion were sympathetic to the FLNKS. The Quai d'Orsay's statement went on to downplay the importance of the UN vote, comparing it to a UN motion on the Falklands War, when against British claims 116 countries had backed Argentinian claims of sovereignty over those disputed islands.

Paris refused to be influenced by the UN any more than by the South Pacific Forum, resting on its argument of non-interference and on its evident commitment to self-determination. French representatives at the UN indicated that as a democratic self-determination vote in New Caledonia was already being organised, the interest of the UN was superfluous. The Forum campaign at the UN was the most concerted effort it had made on the issue of New Caledonia's future; ultimately it achieved little in the face of a French refusal to comply. As was the case with nuclear issues, the South Pacific Forum members did not have the power necessary to force French compliance. None of the countries in the UN which backed the Forum campaign were prepared to take any more than paper and media action over New Caledonia, and it is unlikely they would have

gone any further. France, as one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and as a G7 member, had too much influence in global affairs. The pro-independence lobbying of an electoral majority among the approximately 63,000 Melanesians inhabiting an obscure group of islands in the South-West Pacific was not sufficient cause to arouse international interest to that extent.

Nor was resolution 41/41A in itself an undertaking which furthered the cause of Kanak independence. The resolution placed New Caledonia within the context defined by chapter XI of the UN Charter, the declaration relative to non-self-governing territories. This chapter declares the obligation of powers administering such territories to work to improve their prosperity and to develop their capacity for self-administration while taking into account the political aspirations of their inhabitants.¹¹⁸ This piece of text makes no reference to any obligation by the administering power to lead its non-self-governing territories to independence. France could claim to be in the process of fulfilling all of these stipulations quite adequately. Resolution 41/41A also made reference to UN General Assembly motion 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. Resolution 1514 (XV) specified notably that all peoples have the right to self-determination.¹¹⁹ The question this item begs is whether the Kanaks of New Caledonia constituted a people and a people to the exclusion of other territorial groups. The Chirac Government maintained that they did not. Moreover, resolution 41/41A itself referred to "the people of New Caledonia" rather than specifically to Kanaks. The UN decolonisation committee had rejected the narrower emphasis of the South Pacific Forum on promoting the interests of the "Kanak people" as undemocratic and imprecise. Resolution 41/41A was of symbolic importance only, and did not constitute international diplomatic backing of FLNKS demands for Kanak independence.

Although the Forum declaration of August 1986 on New Caledonian self-determination had expressed support for the priority of "the aspirations of the Kanak people", it did not specifically voice backing for Kanak sovereignty in answer to FLNKS calls for recognition. To the disappointment of Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, other Forum members such as Australia, New Zealand and Fiji were reluctant to promote Kanak independence explicitly and exclusively. A compromise of sorts was reached to account for the presence of other ethnic groups in New Caledonia. In August 1986 the Forum referred to Kanaks and "other peoples":

It [the Forum] concluded that if the results of that plebiscite ruled out the prospect of independence, this was likely to exacerbate rather than resolve problems in the territory. It urged the French Government to give careful attention to the question of those eligible to vote, so that the result accurately reflected the aspirations of the Kanak and other peoples who had a long-term residence in and commitment to New Caledonia.¹²⁰

There was some slack logic involved in this proclamation. If the results of the self-determination referendum ruled out the prospect of independence, it was precisely because they demonstrated the lack of majority electoral backing in New Caledonia for Kanak positions, thus clearly reflecting the aspirations of the "other peoples" who were present.

The looseness of Forum thinking on the self-determination referendum was to become more apparent as time passed. The Forum meeting of 29 to 30 May 1987 in Apia reiterated the earlier position of the body on self-determination:

The Forum once again expressed its firm support for an early and peaceful transition to an independent New Caledonia in accordance with the innate and active rights of the indigenous people and in a manner which guaranteed the rights and interests of all inhabitants of this multi-racial society.¹²¹

It was recommended that a self-determination vote should involve: "Inclusion in the franchise of only those who can demonstrate long term residence in and commitment to New Caledonia. It should ensure that the rights and interests of all inhabitants are guaranteed, with special recognition of Kanak rights."¹²² This final condition loosely suggested some sort of special voting rights for Kanaks. This point clashed with the earlier stipulation that the transition to independence would guarantee the rights of "all inhabitants", unless one adheres to the Orwellian maxim that some are more equal than others.

The Quai d'Orsay responded to the Forum position with reference to UN legislation. It indicated in October 1987 that a vote based on ethnic origin was incompatible with UN principles as well as with French constitutional practice, which demanded that such an exercise not be influenced by distinctions of race, belief or colour. It declared that the three-year residential qualification for local voter eligibility, introduced by Chirac in February 1987, satisfied considerations concerning long term residence. Normally under French law, only six months' residence was required for eligibility in an electoral consultation. The three year period was the same that had been used by France for the self-determination vote which led to the independence of Djibouti, an exercise which had been approved by the UN General Assembly.¹²³ To round off its tight argument, the Quai d'Orsay suggested that the self-determination referendum thus fulfilled UN conditions for a such a vote and was democratic.

As well as being vague and confused in its logic, the demand of the South Pacific Forum was fundamentally unachievable. The Forum lambasted the Chirac Government for setting up a vote that the FLNKS could not win, heedless of the fact that if the vote were weighted to the advantage of Kanaks, it would violate French law and UN principles, and would doubtless lead to a backlash from French loyalists. It was highly improbable that, under the conditions the Forum wished established, France could have managed a "peaceful transition to an independent New Caledonia in accordance with the innate, active rights and aspiration of the indigenous people *and* in a manner which guaranteed the rights and interest of *all* inhabitants of this multi-racial society." The Forum might as well have asked the Chirac Government to square a circle. The Quai d'Orsay indicated the difficulties and contradictions involved in following Forum demands:

La thèse réservant le droit de vote à une fraction de la population, notamment sur une base ethnique, est évidemment inacceptable. Elle remettrait notamment en cause des principes fondamentaux comme la non-discrimination et "à chacun une voix". Ce dernier principe a été expressément affirmé par l'Assemblée générale dans le cas de la Rhodésie du Sud, devenue Zimbabwe, (résolution 1747 (XVI)) et de Fidji (résolutions 1951 (XVIII) et 2068 (XX)). Manifestement contraire aux principes des Nations unies, l'idée selon laquelle la plénitude des droits politiques devrait être réservée à une partie seulement de la population calédonienne est en outre dangereuse. Elle peut être source de violence et d'instabilité, comme en témoignent certains développements récents intervenus dans la région du Pacifique Sud.¹²⁴

For the French Government setting up a biased vote for Kanaks was unacceptable in that such an undertaking would have led to a constitutional crisis, and to civil disorder. The reference to recent developments in the South Pacific clearly alluded to events in Fiji, although specific mention was avoided to avoid antagonising Suva. In September 1987, Rabuka had established a Fijian Republic which enshrined the supremacy of the indigenous Fijian minority of the population. The Quai d'Orsay's resort to UN resolutions to back its case was somewhat hollow given its own rejection of that body's motion concerning New Caledonia, although the statement made a valid point in indicating the problems of a restricted vote excluding a large segment of New Caledonia's non-indigenous voters.

The Forum kept pushing its demands through the UN as well as through its own declarations. On 17 March 1987, the UN decolonisation committee urged the French Government to undertake a New Caledonian self-determination referendum in accordance with UN principles and in cooperation with the committee.¹²⁵ France rejected this for the reasons already outlined. Such cooperation would have been superfluous, and the self-determination vote organised by the Chirac Government fulfilled UN conditions.

After the self-determination referendum of September 1987 reaffirmed the will of a majority of New Caledonian voters to stay with France, (Table 12) support for the Forum declined. On 28 October 1987, the UN General Assembly failed to approve a motion tabled by the decolonisation committee condemning the New Caledonian self-determination referendum. Of 158 countries, 43.67% backed the motion: 69 voted for, 27 against, 46 abstained and 15 failed to vote.¹²⁶ The support presented the previous December did not stretch to the extent of calling France to account over a democratic self-determination vote. The international community did not lend majority backing to the assertion made by the FLNKS that the vote was unjust. On 4 December 1987, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution reaffirming the right of the New Caledonian people to self-determination and independence. While this motion covered the same ground as resolution 41/41A a year before, this time support had fallen by 20 votes: 69 countries were for the motion, 29 against and 47 abstained. The South Pacific Forum no longer enjoyed the support of an absolute majority of the Assembly for its motion of generalised support for New Caledonian self-determination in consultation with the UN.¹²⁷

The Quai d'Orsay pointed out this decline in backing in a communiqué released that day. Noting that 90 countries had refused to support the decolonisation committee, this outcome was taken as a sign of confidence in the actions of the Chirac Government:

Le Gouvernement constate que la grande majorité des Etats ont ainsi pris en compte les faits essentiels que sont le référendum et l'adoption en cours d'un nouveau statut qui assurera l'autonomie de gestion du territoire [le statut Pons], une représentation équitable des différentes communautés que l'histoire y a réunies et l'association effective de la minorité à la gestion des affaires. Le Gouvernement s'en félicite et exprime l'espoir que les pays du Forum du Pacifique Sud respecteront désormais la volonté démocratiquement exprimée par la majorité de la population calédonienne et renonceront à leur entreprise.¹²⁸

This reading of the motive for the vote was open to question. The decline in international support for New Caledonian decolonisation could as plausibly be seen as a sign of lack of interest in an obscure and marginal matter in the wider scheme of global politics. The Forum had originally aroused support from various countries which assumed that New Caledonia was on the verge of independence. The self-determination vote proved otherwise. It is doubtful whether many of the countries which voted either for, against, or not at all, had any detailed conception of the political situation in the territory, still less of the import of the Regional Autonomy Statute being prepared by Pons.

By the end of 1987 the internationalisation of political debate over New Caledonia had turned out to be inconclusive and unsatisfying for the FLNKS, for the South Pacific Forum, and for France. FLNKS efforts to gain international support fell short of a vigorous, unqualified recognition of Kanak sovereignty which would have served its cause better than the motions of general support for the self-determination rights of the New Caledonian people expressed by the UN. The lobbying of the South Pacific Forum had not induced a change in the New Caledonian policy of the Chirac Government. And for all of French representatives' efforts to rebutt the lobbying of South Pacific nations, and to outargue their adversaries' loose logic, they had demonstrated themselves incapable of dissuading these critics. Neither the cutting of ministerial relations

in the case of Australia, nor the logic of the French diplomatic corps, served to sway the regional conviction that New Caledonian independence would come and that regional states were justified in exercising their prerogatives on the matter. Whereas the position of the Chirac Government was that the self-determination vote had settled the question of independence, it did not satisfy the South Pacific Forum, which continued calling into 1988 for a 'genuine' act of self-determination. It had been asserted at the May 1987 meeting of the Forum that the non-participation of the FLNKS invalidated the referendum.¹²⁹ At the UN, Forum members continued opposing the result of the referendum on these grounds, stating that the vote had caused the situation in New Caledonia to deteriorate rather than improve. The worsening internal situation in the territory during the first months of 1988 was asserted by Forum members to represent vindication of regional claims.

Although its initiatives had failed to influence the New Caledonian policy of the Chirac Government, and had not advanced the cause of New Caledonian independence, the South Pacific Forum showed no sign of abating its criticisms of French policy. To the contrary, regional comments became more intense at the time of the FLNKS active boycott of April and May 1988. Forum members expressed the opinion that FLNKS activism was the direct consequence of an administration in Paris insensitive to Kanak political demands. It was a valid assessment to the extent that Pons showed little regard for the Front following the self-determination vote. But equally, the FLNKS had shown little regard for the self-determination vote. Even had Pons wanted to appear conciliatory to the FLNKS, this was politically difficult for him in the face of the refusal of the Front to participate in new territorial institutions.

Several members of the Forum issued individual statements objecting to Chirac's handling of the Ouvéa incident. Although members of the FLNKS had initiated violence on Ouvéa by killing four gendarmes at Fayaoué, France was portrayed as the aggressor by the PNG Government.¹³⁰ Mara talked dismissively of French "gunboat diplomacy".¹³¹ Vanuatu concurred with these assessments and went a step further in organising a protest which disrupted the voting of French residents in the second round of the presidential elections on 8 May. Barak Sope, the Immigration and Tourism Minister, padlocked the gate of the French Embassy in Port Vila in a demonstration of support for the FLNKS boycott. While around 200 protesters tried to prevent French nationals from entering to vote, many voters sneaked in through a side entrance.¹³² From Wellington, Marshall made his aforementioned comparison to the Algerian War.¹³³ Hawke was more measured in his assessment, hoping that the FLNKS would renounce violence and that the French Government could open dialogue.¹³⁴

The Matignon Accords

By the time of the meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Tonga in September 1988, New Caledonian self-determination was not a major issue of debate. Criticism of French treatment of the New Caledonian portfolio had been replaced by praise for the new atmosphere of reconciliation installed by the Matignon Accords.¹³⁵ The reintroduction of self-determination by the Accords, scheduled this time for 1998, had served to satisfy Forum demands regardless of the fact that the conditions involved were as unlikely to guarantee Kanak independence as the conditions of the 1987 vote. In the place of ill-reasoned opposition to French policy on New Caledonian self-determination, the Forum had substituted equally ill-reasoned support. The consequence was that from 1988 New Caledonian policy became less of an obstacle to French regional diplomacy than it had been, although as the Forum has analysed the Accords more it has become more critical.

The departure of the Chirac Government in May 1988, the re-election of Mitterrand, and the negotiations which led to the signature of the Matignon Accords, allowed a calming of regional tempers over New Caledonia, and enabled the beginning of a period of more relaxed dialogue between France and the Forum over the territory.

Nevertheless the willingness of the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu to back Kanak self-determination above the interests of non-Kanaks did not diminish in the months following the signature of the Accords. Although he had sent letters to Rocard and Mitterrand congratulating them on their role in setting up the new territorial framework,¹³⁶ Lini called in November 1988 for the immediate decolonisation of New Caledonia, and his VP Government maintained its backing of FLNKS primacy.¹³⁷ This position was at odds with the policy of the FLNKS at the time. By signing the Matignon Accords, the FLNKS had recognised French loyalists as partners in territorial development, and had deferred the issue of independence at least ten years. Since 1988 Vanuatu has been less vocal in its position over New Caledonia. This change has come partly out of concern to restore aid links with France, and partly because for Port Vila, as with the rest of the South Pacific Forum members, it was politically untenable to make vehement statements about the malevolent influence of French colonialism in New Caledonia when the FLNKS was working in cooperation with French institutions there. As is shown in the next chapter, the period of the Matignon Accords, along with the arrival of a new Vanuatu Government in December 1991, coincided with the improvement of aid relations between Paris and Port Vila.

The Hawke Government declared its relief that Mitterrand had been re-elected so that the Socialists could sort out New Caledonia, and was united with the Lange Government in approving the signature of the Matignon Accords.¹³⁸ The time of marked temperamental differences based on party political divergences between Paris, and Canberra and Wellington came to an end. The end of civil disorder in New Caledonia for the time being removed Australasian worries about the decline of regional security.

Changed Franco-Australian attitudes were perceptible during the visit to New Caledonia from 14 to 15 September 1988 by Gareth Evans, the Australian Foreign Minister. Among his entourage was Dauth, serving as a ministerial adviser, whose presence aroused no official protests in spite of his controversial departure from Nouméa the year before.¹³⁹ The visit was hailed by Bernard Grasset, the local High Commissioner, as a sign of Franco-Australian reconciliation over New Caledonia. Ukeiwé expressed on the RPCR's behalf the hope that past differences would not be renewed. Both declared their preparedness to cooperate with Australia to improve trade and cooperation links with New Caledonia.¹⁴⁰ By February 1992, Evans had visited the territory four times in an effort to diversify Franco-Australian cooperation,¹⁴¹ showing greater interest in the territory than his predecessors. The removal in February 1992 of trade barriers affecting Australian exports to New Caledonia marked just one of the signs of improved relations between Nouméa and Canberra.¹⁴² Hawke made an effort to improve relations with New Caledonia too. Breaking a remarkable symbol of Australian indifference towards New Caledonia, from 27 to 28 July 1989 he paid the first visit to the territory by an Australian Prime Minister since 1941. Hawke congratulated France's progress in New Caledonia with the Matignon Accords, and stated his support for greater bilateral trade and cooperation.¹⁴³

Following the signature of the Accords Franco-New Zealand relations similarly improved. On 30 April 1989, Marshall arrived in Nouméa and praised the Accords.¹⁴⁴ Grasset and Marshall resolved to organise student exchanges between New Caledonia and New Zealand. The installation of a National Government in Wellington from November 1990 calmed the situation further. Bolger had disagreed with commentaries made on New Caledonia by Labour

Governments, concurring with the French position that the situation in the territory was an internal matter. He had responded negatively to comments made by Lange during the Ouvéa incident.¹⁴⁵ Bolger's Foreign Minister, Don McKinnon, arrived in New Caledonia for a tour from 21 to 24 November 1991. McKinnon announced a different New Zealand response to territorial politics: "Contrairement au gouvernement d'avant [le gouvernement travailliste], nous ne vous dirons pas ce que vous devez faire". McKinnon said he would not make pronouncements on the question of independence, and that the Bolger Government would not push the issue at the South Pacific Forum.¹⁴⁶ This stance was a major change from the days of the Lange Government, when New Zealand had ventured to ask France to annul the self-determination referendum of 1987.¹⁴⁷ McKinnon was enthusiastic about the improvement of New Zealand contacts with New Caledonia, placing emphasis on the liberalisation and expansion of bilateral trade.¹⁴⁸ The days when Wellington, along with Canberra, had been considered the ringleaders of a campaign to push France out of the South Pacific, were now clearly over. The two most developed nations of the region were prepared to respond to French efforts at regional integration under the Accords, a trend which was applicable to New Caledonia's nascent relations with the island states. As is discussed in chapter 8, the Matignon Accords spurred French regional cooperation.

Since 1988, with some reservations from Melanesian member countries, the South Pacific Forum has expressed encouragement of the Matignon Accords, and has declared its support for development work taking place under them.¹⁴⁹ The Forum responded positively to the Rocard Government's aim to encourage territorial trade and development cooperation with the nations of the South Pacific. In other respects, however, differences which separated France from the Forum over New Caledonia have not been eliminated by the Matignon Accords.

The Forum has continued issuing advice to France on how it should conduct itself. The 1991 and 1992 Forum communiqués, for example, urged Paris to expand its education and training assistance to Kanaks, and advised it on how the 1998 self-determination referendum should be run.¹⁵⁰ The Forum has maintained its call on France to permit visits by UN missions to New Caledonia, in line with UN resolution 41/41A. Whatever doubts might have subsisted about the Forum's claim that the transition to independence should take into account the interests of all the communities in New Caledonia were dispelled by its statement of July 1991. This declaration mentioned that the Forum "offered to assist the FLNKS in developing a programme of action for ensuring that their [sic] objectives were met through the Matignon Accords. It further agreed to the establishment of a fund to assist with the training of Kanaks within and outside the region to be administered by the [Forum] Secretariat".¹⁵¹ Since 1988, the FLNKS has not publicly disavowed its advocacy of Kanak sovereignty, meaning that the above statement offers direct Forum support for Kanak-led independence. Interestingly, as a Forum member New Zealand supported this statement, which appeared to contradict the claim made by McKinnon in Nouméa in November 1991. In 1991 the Bolger Government was simultaneously trying to be conciliatory to France and to Melanesian nations in the Forum.

Under the Fabius or Chirac Governments, such a Forum declaration would have received an outraged response from the Quai d'Orsay about intolerable interference in French internal politics. Such sentiment still exists in Paris, although objections to Forum commentary on, and involvement in, New Caledonian affairs have not been as strenuous. As might be expected, French Governments since 1988 have been happy to see regional governments make positive comments about New Caledonian policy, even though such comments too could strictly be seen as an aspect of foreign meddling in domestic affairs. There was a time when the Forum's Kanak training fund might have been

perceived, in the same way as Australian aid administered by Dauth, as interference in domestic affairs. This attitude had been discarded. No complaints were made about the training fund, which was in operation by 1992,¹⁵² as it was seen by Paris to be in harmony with the spirit of Kanak integration promoted by the Accords.

Certain limits remain. Under the Matignon Accords, France has maintained its refusal of any UN involvement. Forum calls to permit UN monitoring teams to visit New Caledonia during the lead up to the self-determination referendum of 1998 have been rejected. The stance of Paris over this matter has been in line with arguments previously put forth about the superfluosity of such assistance. After the Forum reiterated this call at its meeting on Nauru on 11 August 1993 Jacques Le Blanc, the Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, rejected the demand: "we [France] don't accept any foreign intervention, especially from the United Nations, since self-determination is exactly what the UN is looking for".¹⁵³

With regard to visits to New Caledonia by Forum delegations, French authorities have been more flexible than might be presumed from Le Blanc's comment. Rocard rejected a Forum application in 1990 to allow members of its Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia to visit the territory to monitor the Accords, on the grounds that this constituted interference in internal affairs.¹⁵⁴ However, after FLNKS prompting, two members of the Ministerial Committee, the Fijian Trade Minister Berenado Vunibobo and the Solomons Foreign Minister, Sir Peter Kenilorea, were eventually allowed to tour New Caledonia from 13 to 22 July 1991 on the understanding that they did not refer to themselves as a monitoring team. This subterfuge could not conceal the fact that the pair did in fact constitute a monitoring team, which travelled around the provinces reviewing developments under the Accords, and later submitted a report of its findings to the Forum meeting at Pohnpei.¹⁵⁵ Paris in addition permitted Ieremia Tabai, the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Forum, to visit New Caledonia in August 1992 to hold discussions with the partners in the Matignon Accords and to view their progress. The visit was hailed by RPCR leaders, and by officials from the High Commission, as an indication of the degree to which a rapprochement had taken place between France and the Forum over New Caledonia.¹⁵⁶

Early indications suggest that the appointment of the Balladur Government and the commencement of a second period of cohabitation is not going to cause a souring of relations between Paris and the Forum. During a stop in Suva on 18 June 1993, on his first tour of the Pacific TOM as Minister to the DOM-TOM, Dominique Perben stated French willingness to maintain contacts and cooperation established between New Caledonia and the Forum. After a meeting with Perben at the offices of the Forum Secretariat in Suva, Tabai was globally positive about Franco-Forum entente over New Caledonia: "I reiterated to the Minister the Forum's support for the Matignon Accords and its gratification that all parties are committed to accelerating economic and social progress under the accords. The Minister assured me of the French Government's continuing commitment to the process."¹⁵⁷

That the relaxing French attitude to the South Pacific Forum had not been reversed by the installation of the Balladur Government was further demonstrated in July 1993. Just before the South Pacific Forum meeting held on Nauru in August, a full Forum delegation was permitted to travel around New Caledonia to gather material for its annual report. The Ministerial Delegation on New Caledonia was led by Francis Saemala, the Solomon Islands Foreign Minister. He was accompanied by Ratu Jo Nacola, the Fijian Minister for Women, Culture, Social Welfare and Multiethnic Affairs, Vinsén Detanamo, the Nauruan Minister of Public Works, and Willie Star, a Nauruan parliamentarian.¹⁵⁸ This time there was no pretence that the party was not an official delegation.

By 1993, the question of decolonisation, like nuclear issues, no longer represented the hindrance to French relations with the states of the South Pacific that it had in the 1980s. As long as the FLNKS and the RPCR adhere to the Matignon Accords, these cordial foreign relations should remain intact. While the South Pacific Forum has expressed certain misgivings about French unwillingness to cooperate with the UN in the self-determination vote scheduled for 1998, and has urged that greater efforts be made to improve the lot of Kanaks, it has nevertheless welcomed the Matignon Accords as a positive, peaceful response to the future of New Caledonia.

Notes

- ¹ "Réception à la mairie de Christchurch (30 avril 1991). Allocution de M. Michel Rocard, Premier ministre." Photocopied speech notes p.1.
- ² "La communauté mélanésienne, originaire du territoire de Nouvelle-Calédonie, première victime des déséquilibres issus de la colonisation". Rocard's letter to Mitterrand, in République française: *Référendum du 6 novembre 1988 sur la Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.1.
- ³ For example, in September 1982, Chirac referred to the Mauroy Government's New Caledonian reforms as "[l']incarnation d'un colonialisme périmé". *Le Monde* 4 septembre 1982.
- ⁴ *The Press* 10 October 1990; *Pacnews* 19 October 1990.
- ⁵ See the beginning of chapter 5.
- ⁶ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 5 novembre 1984 p.4885.
- ⁷ With Jean-Marie Tjibaou's status as Mayor of Hienghène in mind Jean-Loup Vivier, a metropolitan French commentator, observed of the FLNKS: "Il convient de s'étonner en premier lieu de ce que les membres d'un gouvernement provisoire indépendantiste participent aux institutions coloniales qu'ils prétendent combattre: imagine-t-on Ho Chi-Minh maire de Hanoï sous la IV^e République?" Jean-Loup Vivier: *Mon chemin avec le FLNKS* p.53. Vivier worked as a lawyer for members of the FLNKS in the late 1980s.
- ⁸ ARLR: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie: la stratégie, le droit et la République* p.XII.
- ⁹ Haut-Commissariat de la République dans l'Océan Pacifique: *Argumentaire relatif à la présence de la France en Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.1.
- ¹⁰ *JO. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale. Questions écrites* 30 novembre 1981 p.3450.
- ¹¹ Christnacht: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.64.
- ¹² *Le Quotidien de Paris* 18 avril 1985 cited in Coutau-Bégarie & Seurin: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie. Les antipodes de la démocratie* p.198.
- ¹³ *Le Monde* 13-14 janvier 1985.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.* 7-8 avril 1985, 9 avril 1985.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.* 5 avril 1985.
- ¹⁶ Aldrich & Connell: *France's Overseas Frontier* p.207.
- ¹⁷ Jean-Christophe Victor: "France in the Pacific" in *The Pacific Review* vol.3 no.4 1990 p.346.
- ¹⁸ 1,401,229t of 1,443,908t. Christnacht: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.90.
- ¹⁹ Haut-Commissariat de la République dans l'Océan Pacifique: *Argumentaire relatif à la présence de la France en Nouvelle-Calédonie* p.10.
- ²⁰ Victor: "France in the Pacific" p.345.
- ²¹ Jacques Marseille: *Empire colonial et capitalisme français. Histoire d'un divorce* p.41.
- ²² *Ibid.* p.31.
- ²³ Jacques Marseille: "Ces colonies qui appauvrirent la France" in *L'Événement du jeudi* 15-21 avril 1993 p.52.
- ²⁴ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 5 novembre 1984 p.4885.
- ²⁵ The beginning of the official statement issued by the Minister's office said: "The Minister for Foreign Affairs [...] said today that New Caledonia represented one of the last vestiges of colonialism in the South Pacific. Australia strongly supports the principle of self-determination and would like to see New Caledonia join the community of the South Pacific countries as soon as is realistically possible." *Australian Foreign Affairs Record* November 1984 p.1259.
- ²⁶ "Communiqué du ministère des relations extérieures en date du 29 novembre 1984 sur la convocation de l'ambassadeur d'Australie à propos de la situation en Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *BIPA* green file 001 184 842931700; *Libération* 29 novembre 1984.
- ²⁷ *Australian Foreign Affairs Record* April 1985 p.345. In December 1984 Jean Chérioux, an RPR Senator for Paris, resigned from the Franco-Australian Friendship Group, of which he was Vice-President, declaring his outrage at Hayden's comments, which were described as constituting an "ingérence inadmissible" in French affairs. *Le Monde* 1er décembre 1984.
- ²⁸ *The Press* 30 April 1988; *Le Monde* 30 avril 1988.
- ²⁹ "Si vous [Chirac] persistez dans la répression, vous vous acheminez vers un conflit sanglant et plein d'amertume qui pourrait aboutir non seulement à un carnage, mais aussi à une situation où des gens pourraient être contraints de quitter [la Nouvelle-Calédonie]." *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 mai 1988; *Le Monde* 2 mai 1988. It should be noted that in the 1950s Australia and New Zealand had supported France rather than Algerian nationalists during the

period of nationalist struggle in French Algeria: Pierre Chaussan: "La France dans le Pacifique" in *Défense nationale* vol.34 juillet 1978 p.76.

³⁰ "Les dernières déclarations de M. Marshall concernant la Nouvelle-Calédonie constituent une ingérence intolérable dans les affaires intérieures françaises." "Communiqué du ministère des affaires étrangères en date du 2 mai 1988 sur les positions néo-zélandaises sur la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in BIPA green file 002 262 882009700.

³¹ *Le Monde* 1er décembre 1984.

³² *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 12 octobre 1987.

³³ *L'année politique, économique et sociale en France 1987* p.60; *Libération* 27 août 1987; *Le Monde* 28 août 1987.

³⁴ For examples see A. Huetz de Lempis & C. Huetz de Lempis: "Les forces géo-politiques en présence dans le sud-ouest du Pacifique" in ARLR: *La Nouvelle-Calédonie: la stratégie, le droit et la République* p.33; Hervé Coutau-Bégarie: "Pacifique Sud, mer oublié?" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 87 année 1988 no.2 p.55; Doisy: *Chroniques des années de cendres* p.40.

³⁵ "Communiqué du ministre des affaires étrangères en date du 5 janvier 1987 sur les relations franco-australiennes" in BIPA green file 001 513 872000500.

³⁶ *Le Monde* 7 janvier 1987.

³⁷ Ibid. 13 janvier 1987.

³⁸ Ibid. 15 janvier 1987.

³⁹ *Le Point* 7 septembre 1987.

⁴⁰ *The Press* 23 July 1985.

⁴¹ *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)* 6 July - 12 August 1985 p.6416.

⁴² *The Bulletin* 5 March 1985.

⁴³ *Le Monde* 10 janvier 1985.

⁴⁴ *Le Point* 7 septembre 1987.

⁴⁵ Comité FLNKS de Lyon *et al.*: "Indépendance pour le peuple kanak". Supplément à *Damoclès* no.32 avril/mai 1988 p.27.

⁴⁶ *Le Monde* 29 septembre 1987.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 21 février 1988.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 7 janvier 1987.

⁴⁹ *The Guardian* 16 March 1986.

⁵⁰ *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 17 novembre 1986 p.4263.

⁵¹ *Le Monde* 2 septembre 1986.

⁵² *Australian Foreign Affairs and Trade* June 1989 p.247.

⁵³ For example, Isabelle Doisy wrote: "L'Australie et la Nouvelle-Zélande commentent abondamment la situation calédonienne. Ils appuient les revendications indépendantistes, un peu inquiets toutefois des accointances libyennes de ces derniers. Cependant, leur désir d'étendre leur influence dans la zone du Pacifique-Sud semble être le plus fort. Les richesses minières et marines de l'île ne sont pas étrangères à cette optique. En outre les deux pays ont [chacun] un gouvernement travailliste." *Chroniques des années de cendres* p.40.

⁵⁴ Fraser: *Your Flag's Blocking our Sun*.

⁵⁵ *Le Matin* 13 janvier 1987; *Le Figaro* 13 janvier 1987.

⁵⁶ "Transcript of interview with Bob Hawke. Télévision France Channel One, 31 January 1987" photocopy p.3.

⁵⁷ See Queval: "Asie/Pacifique" p.182; and Roland-Pierre Paringaux, *Le Monde* correspondant, in *The Guardian* 16 March 1986.

⁵⁸ *Le Monde* 3 décembre 1986; *The Press* 3 December 1986.

⁵⁹ *Libération* 27 août 1987; *Le Monde* 28 août 1987.

⁶⁰ "Et je m'élève avec force contre les procès, contre les attaques et les accusations qui ont été portés contre la France dans cette région [le Pacifique Sud], alors que ceux-là mêmes qui portent des accusations contre notre pays devraient balayer devant leur porte car, dans bien des cas, ils n'ont pas eu une attitude convenable à l'égard de certaines minorités qui existent sur chacun de leur territoire et dans chacun de leur pays." *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 9 novembre 1986 p.6111.

⁶¹ *Le Monde* 4 décembre 1986.

⁶² "Et il y en a, des appétits extérieurs! La façon dont agit, par exemple, l'Australie, est tout à fait surprenante, parce que, si le problème des autochtones d'origine, en Australie, ne se pose plus, c'est parce que - enfin il y a bien encore des aborigènes -c'est parce qu'on les a tués!" Ibid. 18 décembre 1984.

- 63 *The Australian* 23 February 1988.
- 64 *The Press* 17 May 1993.
- 65 *Pacific Islands Monthly* October 1993 p.8.
- 66 Concerning the eradication of Tasmanian Aborigines, and the colonialist campaigns conducted against the Australian Aborigines, see Henry Reynolds: *The Other Side of the Frontier. Aboriginal Resistance to the European Invasion of Australia*.
- 67 Richard Broome: *Aboriginal Australians: black response to white dominance* p.178.
- 68 *Pacific News Bulletin* September 1993 p.3.
- 69 "Mr Hayden: interview with Sylvie Crossman, *Le Monde*, on 5 March 1987. Australia/France relations on New Caledonia". Photocopied transcript p.7.
- 70 "Transcript of interview with Bob Hawke. Télévision France Channel One, 31 January 1987" photocopy p.3.
- 71 *Canberra Times* 9 September 1988.
- 72 See John Fuhrmann: "East Timor: an intractable problem" in *New Zealand International Review* vol.17 no.6 November/December 1992 pp.26-29.
- 73 *Ibid.*
- 74 "Eighteenth South Pacific Forum, Apia, Western Samoa, 29-30 May 1987. Forum communiqué." Photocopy p.1.
- 75 The 1991, 1992 and 1993 meetings of the Forum were strenuous in their efforts to ignore the internationalisation of the Bougainville conflict. *The Press* 18 July 1991, 14 August 1993; *Pacific Islands Monthly* August 1992 p.27.
- 76 *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1993 p.6.
- 77 *Sydney Morning Herald* 7 January 1982 cited in Ward: *New Caledonia - the Immediate Prospects* p.54.
- 78 *Ibid.* p.55.
- 79 *Ibid.*
- 80 *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1979 p.14.
- 81 *Ibid.* p.10.
- 82 *The Press* 11 August 1981.
- 83 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 9 mars 1983.
- 84 *The Press* 18 July 1979.
- 85 *Ibid.* 12 May 1981.
- 86 "France-Nouvelle-Zélande" 17 juin 1981 in BIPA white file 811152400.
- 87 *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)* vol.458 9 October 1984 p.931.
- 88 *The Press* 19 May 1986.
- 89 *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)* vol.475 23 October 1986 p.5195.
- 90 Elise Huffer: "Les îles dans le monde ou le monde vu des îles: une approche comparée de la politique extérieure des trois micro-Etats océaniques: Fidji, Tonga et Vanuatu" in *Journal de la société des océanistes* 92-93 année 1991 nos.1 & 2 p.14.
- 91 Cited in *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1979 p.11.
- 92 The official title of this body is the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In the interests of brevity, its unofficial title, 'UN decolonisation committee', is used in this work.
- 93 *Ibid.* p.10.
- 94 FLNKS: *La charte du FLNKS* p.7.
- 95 *Ibid.* p.17.
- 96 *Le Monde* 11 août 1982.
- 97 Cited in Ward: *New Caledonia - the Immediate Prospects* p.52.
- 98 *Le Monde* 5-6 décembre 1982.
- 99 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 26 mars 1983.
- 100 *Le Monde* 10 janvier 1985.
- 101 Huffer: "Les îles dans le monde ou le monde vu des îles: une approche comparée de la politique extérieure des trois micro-Etats océaniques: Fidji, Tonga et Vanuatu" p.13; *Le Monde* 10 janvier 1985.
- 102 *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)* vol.452 26 August 1983 pp.1853-4; De Deckker et al.: *Où en est la Nouvelle-Zélande?* p.43; *The Dominion* 9 January 1985.
- 103 *The Australian* 23 February 1988.

- 104 *Solomon Islands News Drum* 13 March 1981; *Solomon Islands Government Monthly* 31 July 1982.
- 105 "New Caledonia, like Fiji, has a multiracial and multicultural population. When we in Fiji sought independence for our country from Britain, we did so in dialogue with the British Government, and the status we wanted and were given by Britain was an independent Fiji with a secure and equal place for everyone in our multiracial and multicultural society. [...] If Fiji is asked to support independence for New Caledonia but only for the Kanak people, the government clearly cannot lend its support to such a position." *Islands Business* August 1985 p.18. Mara's cooperation from October 1987 with Rabuka in the foundation of a Republic of Fiji founded on the primacy of indigenous Fijians later undermined the sincerity of Mara's professed concern for a multicultural Fiji.
- 106 *Le Monde* 23 mai 1986; *Australian Foreign Affairs Review* August 1986 p.726.
- 107 *Le Monde* 28 août 1986.
- 108 *Ibid.* 1 août 1986.
- 109 *Islands Business* September 1986 p.12.
- 110 *Ibid.*
- 111 "Seventeenth South Pacific Forum, Suva, Fiji, 8-11 August 1986. Forum Communiqué." Photocopy p.2.
- 112 *Ibid.* p.1.
- 113 *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1986 p.913.
- 114 *Ibid.*
- 115 *Ibid.*
- 116 *Ibid.* p.914.
- 117 "Communiqué du ministère des affaires étrangères en date du 3 décembre 1986 sur les démarches du comité de décolonisation de l'ONU auprès de la France à propos de la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *BIPA* green file 001 525 872001900.
- 118 "By Chapter XI, all the members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibility for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognise the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount. They accept, as a sacred trust, the obligation to promote to the utmost the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories. To that end they accept certain specific obligations, including the obligation to develop self-government and to assist the inhabitants in the progressive development of their free political institutions." *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1946-7 pp.80-81.
- 119 Ziller: *Les DOM-TOM* p.32.
- 120 Seventeenth South Pacific Forum, Suva, Fiji, 8-11 August 1986. Forum Communiqué. Photocopy p.3.
- 121 "Eighteenth South Pacific Forum, Apia, Western Samoa, 29-30 May 1987. Forum communiqué." Photocopy p.4.
- 122 *Ibid.*
- 123 "Memorandum du ministère des affaires étrangères en date du 9 octobre 1987 au sujet de la Nouvelle-Calédonie" in *BIPA* green file 002 139 872015200.
- 124 *Ibid.*
- 125 *UN Chronicle* vol.24 no.2 May 1987 p.40.
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8. French Regional Aid and Cooperation

In 1987 Rabuka staged his illegal coup in the name of indigenous rights. But where is his concern now at the plight of our brothers and sisters in Kanaky and French Polynesia? The silence is deafening because he has been bought off by the Pacific's most hated colonial regime, the French.

Timoci Bavadra, deposed Prime Minister of Fiji, September 1989.¹

It's a sort of obsession, people saying that France is paying off Fiji, the Cook Islands, Western Samoa - it's absurd.

Philippe Baude, French Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, July 1989.²

Cheque-book Diplomacy?

During the 1980s aid and cooperation were aspects of the French role in the South Pacific which were neglected in analysis made both by French and foreign commentators. This situation remained unchanged early in the 1990s. Outside administrative circles, little attention has been dedicated to the patient efforts of French diplomats and aid workers in the Pacific Islands.³ The exception to the rule was provided by Flosse during his time as Secretary of State to the South Pacific. His rapid interventions in May 1986 and in January 1987 with cyclone relief assistance to the Solomon Islands and to the Cook Islands, as well as his negotiation of development aid to the nascent Republic of Fiji in 1987, held significant domestic political implications for the countries involved. Aid initiatives by Flosse also prompted some conjecture in Wellington and Canberra over French motives. Otherwise more dramatic events usually preoccupied and conditioned regional scrutiny of France's South Pacific presence. An examination of the bibliography will reveal a plethora of publications devoted to the controversial questions of Kanak nationalism and French nuclear testing, and very little in relation to French foreign aid, either from a South Pacific or from a French perspective.

For those interested in French foreign aid efforts in the South Pacific since the 1980s, there exists very little source material to work on. The author's researches failed to reveal a single published book or article solely devoted to the topic, although doubtless some pertinent classified reports reside in ministerial files in Paris yet to be opened to public access. This deficiency has only inadequately been compensated for by resort to regional press coverage, resulting in an admittedly incomplete, and statistically patchy, overview. The inadequacy of available material stands in poor contrast to the French literature available on the aid and cooperation of the Fifth Republic in other regions of the world. For example, many reports, books and articles have been published on French aid and cooperation to Sub-Saharan Africa. It is most likely that these differing levels of coverage stem from the recentness and small scale of French aid operations in the South Pacific when viewed by African or Asian standards. France has most of its aid workers and development projects deployed in Africa, a circumstance which reflects the higher level of French economic, cultural and military interest in that continent than in the micro-states of the South Pacific.

When the matter of French foreign aid in the South Pacific was raised in the member nations of the South Pacific Forum during the 1980s, it was usually introduced in a partisan manner with reference to heated, political disputes. The first epigraph on French aid to Fiji by the former Prime Minister of Fiji, Timoci Bavadra, furnishes a vivid example of this tendency. Bavadra employs Rabuka's acceptance of French aid as a rhetorical bludgeon with which to swipe

at the claim of his opponents to legitimacy. Bavadra was highly critical of French aid to Fiji after the coups of 1987. He portrayed such assistance as a "bribe", which Paris was employing to buy the silence of the Fijian Republic on the questions of Kanak nationalism and nuclear testing at Moruroa.⁴ His speculation made extensive reference to a concept colloquially termed 'cheque-book diplomacy': the dispensation of aid by a power to influence the foreign or domestic policy of recipient nations. In response to such uncomplimentary comments, Rocard cancelled a meeting with Bavadra which had been organised as part of his stop in Suva on 23 August 1989.⁵

As the second epigraph by Baude demonstrates, such allegations were emphatically rejected by French representatives. Henri Jacolin, the French Ambassador to Fiji from 1990 to 1993, likewise rejected the assertion that Paris was attempting through the distribution of aid to buy off the Fijian Government, or indeed any other in the South Pacific.⁶ The official French position on aid was that it came without strings attached, and reflected France's willingness to pursue its goal of regional integration. As Pons indicated to the French Polynesian Territorial Assembly in May 1986:

La France entend [...] développer avec le monde polynésien et mélanésien, avec les pays anglo-saxons de la zone, une politique d'amitié et de coopération dépourvue d'arrière-pensées. Elle ne conteste, pour ce qui la concerne, ni les institutions, ni les orientations de politique intérieure et extérieure d'aucun de ses voisins du Pacifique.⁷

There is reason to doubt the validity of Bavadra's dismissive characterisation of the motives for French aid. Contrary to the image he projected, such assistance to the Fijian Republic did not buy the silence of its leaders on events in New Caledonia and French nuclear testing. It was Mara, then Prime Minister of Fiji, who in July 1991 announced the South Pacific Forum's declaration of support for the FLNKS goal of sovereignty, and its backing for the intention of the Front to persuade non-Kanaks to vote for independence in the referendum of 1998.⁸ In June 1989 Ms Taufu Vakatale, the Fijian Secretary of Foreign Affairs, declared that Fiji intended to continue stating its opposition to French nuclear testing regardless of the level of French aid to his government.⁹ Fijian opposition to French testing, which had not progressed beyond statements of opposition in the early 1980s, was maintained after the coups of 1987,¹⁰ when Suva began receiving larger amounts of French aid.

Whereas in the case of French aid to Fiji there was no clear evidence to suggest that France either attempted to, or succeeded in, influencing Fijian policy, it is unnecessary to assume that the distribution of French aid, to Fiji or to any other nation, was totally disinterested. As was the case with other regional powers such as Australia, New Zealand and the United States, aid was employed by France as a method of promoting national foreign policy interests. French aid to Vanuatu in particular was subject to political considerations. In 1981 and again in 1987, when faced with confrontation from Lini's VP Government that led to the expulsion of the French Ambassador, Paris did not hesitate to use the reduction of aid to force a reconsideration of attitudes in Port Vila. However the actions of Vanuatu left France with little alternative but to react, and these signs of deterioration in bilateral relations were counterproductive to the promotion of dialogue and cooperation pursued by France.

Island nations, for their part, had their own interests which should not be overlooked when considering French regional aid. Since 1988, Vanuatu has made concerted efforts to rebuild its relationship with France, in spite of past differences, as French finance is essential to the economic development of the archipelago. Island micro-states, confronted with the physical limitations of marginal resource bases, and slender financial means for their development,

have usually been reluctant to reject French aid in the name of political principles, such as support for New Caledonian decolonisation, or opposition to nuclear testing. The mainly receptive attitude of South Pacific nations to French aid and cooperation marked the limit of their opposition to the French regional presence. A misconception which persists, heedless of this receptiveness, is that South Pacific Forum members have refused to build substantial links with Paris due to differences over matters such as nuclear testing. In 1992, Keith Suter, President of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney, wrote:

France has been a military power in the South Pacific, but not a South Pacific nation. Its nuclear testing has alienated too many nations for it to develop close ties. If the testing were to stop permanently [...] it has an opportunity to develop closer ties with the surrounding nations. It could use its foreign aid, education and cultural programmes to create a fresh set of relations.¹¹

The bulk of this chapter demonstrates that France in the 1980s and early 1990s was not as alienated from South Pacific nations as was frequently believed. French financial, agricultural, scientific, educational, and military aid was offered to, and accepted by, island states during this period. The misconception that the members of the South Pacific Forum were implacably opposed to France in the 1980s is belied by the fact that since 1981, well before the advent of improved multilateral relations due to the implementation of the Matignon Accords in 1988 and the suspension of nuclear testing at Moruroa in 1992, Paris diversified and expanded its aid and cooperation with Forum members. This chapter examines the particular forms this activity took, its international and domestic implications, and its part in the broader French policy of regional dialogue and integration.¹²

The aid referred to throughout this chapter is French external aid. French subsidies to the Pacific TOM have been considered by some South Pacific analysts to fall under the same definition. For the purposes of this work, official French criteria are applied. French ministerial thinking treats aid to the DOM-TOM as domestic funding.¹³ This chapter concentrates on French bilateral aid to South Pacific nations. French government policy has greater direct influence over the distribution of bilateral aid than over French aid channelled through multilateral agencies such as the South Pacific Commission, or the EC. Private French aid distributed to the region by non-governmental agencies is disregarded. In the absence of available data, a detailed statistical analysis of the various aid initiatives undertaken by France, and the effectiveness of these projects in promoting development, is not offered in this chapter. Such an examination is properly the concern of a specialist in the field of development. Rather, the intention below is to ascertain the political consequences of French aid and cooperation in the South Pacific since 1981 to assess the extent to which efforts in this field contributed to, or hindered, the French goal of regional integration.

A Question of Scale

The level of French aid in the South Pacific was one of various aspects of the Fifth Republic's presence in the region which was described by the Pacific boosters of the Institut du Pacifique as inadequate. In 1983, the foundation's book *Le Pacifique, nouveau centre du monde* called for increased French aid and cooperation in the region in order to promote national interests.¹⁴ It was argued that more funding, more personnel and the opening of new facilities would enable greater French participation in the Pacific, and would increase the prestige and influence of the Republic. Similar arguments have been applied more specifically to the South Pacific by Georges Ordonnaud, one of the founders of the Institut du Pacifique:

[...] par imprévoyance, arrogance ou manque d'imagination, la France n'ait pas été à même dans le passé d'accorder à ces petits Etats (Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée - îles Salomon - Vanuatu - Fidji - Tonga - Samoa - Cook - Kiribati - Tuvalu, etc.) une [aide] bilatérale sous forme de subventions, importantes pour ces pays, mais extrêmement faibles par rapport à l'ensemble de nos crédits de coopération. Cela nous aurait permis de nous faire des amis et de mieux justifier nos expérimentations nucléaires.¹⁵

The members of the Institut du Pacifique had unrealistic expectations. Considering that most of the island states of the South Pacific mentioned by Ordonnaud had received independence in the 1970s, were insignificant actors in global politics, retained ties with Britain, Australia and New Zealand rather than with France, and were of marginal interest for French foreign policy, it should not be considered unnatural that France had no close bilateral aid relations with them. Moreover Ordonnaud neglected to do justice to French efforts in Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, where the establishment of resident ambassadorial posts in 1980 demonstrated that Paris was not unaware of the role bilateral aid could play in its South Pacific diplomacy.

It is none the less reasonable to assert that the South Pacific played a marginal part in French global development programmes. In 1984, the French Foreign Ministry admitted that aid to Asia and the Pacific was of a modest nature, before pointing out that this was largely because of the comparatively recent establishment of aid operations there.¹⁶ Paris had turned its back on South-East Asia after the collapse of French Indo-China in the 1950s and only once more began taking an active interest in the region from the 1970s. The Fifth Republic had maintained a presence in the Pacific through the three TOM there and until 1980 the condominium with Britain over the New Hebrides. Nevertheless, prior to British decolonisation in the 1970s there had been no great need, or indeed possibility, for Paris to develop direct relations with the island possessions of its historical rival. Such a development might have been counteractive to good relations in any case as it could have been misinterpreted in London as an attempt to promote French influence at British expense.

During the 1980s, French development aid was concentrated in Africa. In 1984, 68% of French state development and cooperation funding was deployed in Africa.¹⁷ French aid funding for "Reste Asie et Océanie", a polyglot area consisting of certain Asian nations that formed minor areas of French aid distribution and appended states of the South Pacific, amounted to 9.9% of total French aid in 1981, 8.0% in 1982, 11.0% in 1983, and 9.3% in 1984.¹⁸ The number of aid workers deployed in the Pacific confirmed the modest nature of French development operations there in relation to its global efforts. In 1984 there were three French aid workers in Fiji, two in Papua New Guinea, one in Western Samoa, two in Tonga and 76 in Vanuatu. The total number of French aid workers in the region was 84 from a global figure of 15,711 (0.5%). In 1985 there were four aid workers in Fiji, one in Papua New Guinea, one in Western Samoa, one in Tonga, and 59 in Vanuatu; amounting to 66 personnel among 13,549 (0.49%).¹⁹

At the beginning of the 1980s, the level of French financial aid to its various South Pacific recipients was negligible to their economies in all cases except that of Vanuatu. In 1980, Vanuatu received 41.95% of its foreign aid from France,²⁰ a reflection of the historical links between the two countries and French preparedness to maintain a major presence after independence. The recipient of the next largest amount of French aid was Papua New Guinea, although this sum amounted to 0.1% of its total foreign aid received that year.²¹ Following were Tonga, for which French aid constituted 0.5% of its foreign aid,²² and Western Samoa (0.4%).²³ French regional projects that transcended national boundaries accounted for 2.5% of total foreign aid of a similar nature in

the region.²⁴ Total French foreign aid in 1980 amounted to approximately 99.76MFF.²⁵

By 1986, French aid distribution in the South Pacific remained similarly orientated, with Vanuatu again as the largest single recipient. That year France dispensed 78MFF to Vanuatu, 5.4MFF in total to Fiji, Tonga and Nauru, 2.3MFF to Papua New Guinea, and 0.9MFF to Western Samoa. Including technical and scientific cooperation with the two developed countries of the South Pacific, Australia and New Zealand, which was worth 14MFF and 2.3MFF respectively, the total bilateral French aid and cooperation budget amounted to 102.9MFF.²⁶ For 1987, total bilateral aid allocated to the South Pacific was 107.1MFF, and was budgeted at 104.7MFF for 1988.²⁷ The annual total for French aid to the South Pacific fell slightly at the end of the 1980s. In 1989, France spent approximately 95MFF on regional cooperation.²⁸

In comparison with the sums spent annually on development assistance to the Pacific TOM during the 1980s, these figures are of a modest nature. These amounts were also modest compared to the level of aid Britain continued to dispense in the South Pacific after its decolonisations there. In 1984, Britain contributed the equivalent of around 313MFF in bilateral aid to its former Pacific island possessions.²⁹ During the 1980s Australia was the largest single donor of bilateral aid to the South Pacific. In 1988 its total bilateral aid to the region amounted to approximately 1,750MFF. In 1989 the Australian regional aid figure was around 1,880MFF.³⁰ New Zealand was the second largest aid contributor in the South Pacific in the 1980s. In 1987 its annual bilateral aid to the region totalled around 260MFF, and had fallen in value to around 220MFF by 1989.³¹

Although not the principal concern of this chapter, some passing indication should also be given of French contributions to multilateral aid agencies working in the South Pacific. France was a major contributor to development schemes for the African Caribbean and Pacific states associated with the EC. For the period of the third Lomé Convention, from 1986 to 1990, France contributed 23.57% of the 133M Ecu worth of European aid to the South Pacific.³² This percentage was equivalent to 33MFF.³³ Such funding was channelled to Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Tuvalu, Western Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga, the eight convention members in the region.

French aid to the South Pacific Commission in 1988 amounted to 14% of the organisation's core budget, compared with the 33% contribution by Australia, 16% by both New Zealand and the United States, and 12% by Britain. Extrabudgetary funding supplied by France amounted to 14% of the total in 1988, second only to the 16% of the United States.³⁴ French funding to the Commission for 1988 for the core budget amounted to 3.59MFF, while extra-budgetary funding was 4.13MFF. Total French funding to the South Pacific Commission that year reached 7.72MFF.³⁵ French participation in the Lomé Convention began with its creation in 1975. The French role in the South Pacific Commission dated back to its foundation in 1947, further evidence that although this was not bilateral aid, France had not been as neglectful of aid to the zone prior to the 1980s as members of the Institut du Pacifique might suggest.

In February 1991 France opened a new avenue for its aid to multilateral development projects when it agreed to provide funding for the South Pacific Forum. This participation constituted a major sign of the degree to which relations between Paris and the Forum had improved since the middle of the 1980s. The traditional view in Paris was that French funding for multilateral development in the South Pacific should be distributed mainly by the body specifically established for that task: the South Pacific Commission. The Forum had been an unlikely candidate for French development funding because of its traditional ambivalence to France, and because neither France nor its Pacific TOM were members and in the TOMs' case had been refused membership. By 1991, mutual differences between Forum members and Paris had been shelved.

The Forum Secretariat was prepared to receive direct assistance from a power its members had characterised as a destabilising, reactionary presence in the South Pacific. Paris on the other hand was prepared to fund a body which had been formed in 1971 as a platform from which to attack French nuclear policy, and which had developed during the 1980s into the main critic of French sovereignty over the Pacific TOM. By November 1993, France had contributed a total of \$F408,000 to Forum aid projects.³⁶ The funding was distributed by the Forum Secretariat to regional trade promotion, technical assistance, training schemes, and energy projects in member countries. Paris would argue that this assistance was not counter to its interests as the money was not to go to be used by the Forum for political activism.

The French approach to international aid and development is peculiar in that it distinguishes between countries which are "du champ" and "hors champ" for the Ministry of Cooperation and Development. The field of operations administered by its personnel is centred on Africa, followed by the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean. The South Pacific is considered to be outside the domain of the Ministry.³⁷ For this reason, the Quai d'Orsay has played the dominant role in administering French bilateral aid in the South Pacific, although where specialised advice was needed it has necessarily acted in consultation with experts from other Ministries and technical bodies over certain development programmes. Usually, the tasks of approaching island governments, organising assistance packages, and financing them, are performed through the offices of the Foreign Ministry. An exception was the period during which Flosse was Secretary of State to the South Pacific. His mission to improve French relations in the region included provision for arranging development assistance to island states. Flosse had placed at his disposition a special aid and development fund, drawn from the budget of the Quai d'Orsay.³⁸ This South Pacific Cooperation Fund grew rapidly during his time as Secretary of State. He was allocated 10MFF for 1986, 29MFF for 1987 and 35MFF for 1988.³⁹ By 1988, Flosse had also been accorded the command of 50MFF for treasury loans to South Pacific states.⁴⁰ It is unclear just how much of his 1988 budget he disbursed before the end of cohabitation brought about the closure of his Secretariat in June 1988. The channels open to Flosse for the distribution of his development funding were threefold: his office in Papeete, and the French Embassies in Wellington and Suva.⁴¹ A large part of Flosse's aid funding went through the Suva embassy, which in 1987 spent 7.88MFF on regional development projects. Of this sum, multilateral aid (exchanges between Fiji, Vanuatu and New Caledonia) accounted for 3.77MFF, aid to Fiji 1.31MFF, and aid to Tonga 2.51MFF, while Tuvalu received 0.3MFF.⁴² The activities of Flosse were seen by French diplomats in the region as intrusive. The need to give what was in effect a roving ambassador discretion to negotiate aid packages to Fiji was superfluous considering that the Quai d'Orsay already had a permanent staff there able to form more lasting contacts with local community and political leaders than Flosse could have made on his flying visits to Suva. Nevertheless, Flosse's travels did have an impact, as is discussed further below.

As the figures offered above demonstrate, during the 1980s, overall French regional aid did not radically increase in scale, although its distribution pattern changed, and greater provision was made for loans to regional governments. Globally and regionally, development funding offered by Paris to the South Pacific remained a financially small concern. This fact should not be considered extraordinary given the sizes of the populations and the economies of island states. Appropriate aid to such countries tends to be on a small scale. While for some countries this assistance came to be perceived as increasingly important, certain relativities should be borne in mind. Although on Rarotonga a soft loan of 50MFF from Paris might be regarded as an outstanding example of French munificence, such a figure is small when compared to French development loans to Africa or to Eastern Europe. While still a minor budgetary

expenditure for the French State, the political importance of French regional aid increased to some degree during the 1980s, particularly in Fiji and the Cook Islands, where French finance contributed to improved bilateral relations. Conversely, in Vanuatu, the withdrawal of French spending during the 1980s was an indicator of French discontent with the Lini Government.

This difference in scale should not be overlooked, although it might have been in Paris. Massive increases were not necessarily advisable for regional aid. Such a change in state spending might have led to detrimental consequences. However unlikely, were France to have flooded the South Pacific with aid funding in the 1980s, transferred say from a portion of its African operations, other regional aid donors such as Australia and New Zealand would have regarded this push as a French intrusion on their zones of interest. Moreover, the harmful economic effects that a sudden large influx of metropolitan French funding could have on an insular economy have already been observed in the case of French Polynesia, where local production has collapsed and a cycle of dependence on metropolitan France has been installed. More was not necessarily better in the case of aid funding to the South Pacific.

The remaining sections of this chapter discuss the political role of French aid and cooperation with various island states since 1981. French aid to the South Pacific remains a small, peripheral part of French development activity in the world, but for island states the comparatively small sums involved are desirable for their socio-economic progress, and in certain cases have represented an increasingly important political stake.

Overcoming Ambivalence: Aid to the Spearhead Group

From 1980 French relations with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu were marred by trouble in maintaining normal diplomatic links, and by the animosity of these three Melanesian states toward French nuclear testing and policy in New Caledonia. The expression of attitudes inimical to France from Port Moresby, Port Vila and Honiara was made on the basis of a sentiment of pan-Melanesian solidarity. This solidarity came to find its most unified expression in meetings of Melanesian leaders, held from June 1985,⁴³ which passed judgement on French regional policy independently of the South Pacific Forum. In Port Vila on 14 March 1988, Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu formally established what had already become known as the Melanesian Spearhead Group.⁴⁴ The Group maintained opposition to the French presence as the cornerstone of its policies after the signature of the Matignon Accords in 1988. In June 1991 the FLNKS became a full member,⁴⁵ enjoying the same status as the three member countries, at a time when the South Pacific Forum was still insisting that the Front could not attain observer status in the Forum because it did not have governmental status.⁴⁶

The Spearhead Group did not represent all Melanesian countries: Fiji has remained notably absent from it. Moreover, the Group demonstrated growing disunity in the early 1990s over border clashes near Bougainville between the Solomons and Papua New Guinea. To the extent of its members' traditional animosity with France the body can be considered homogeneous, and may thus be treated as a unified entity in discussion of French regional policy. This section considers how ambivalence and periodic disputes with the Melanesian Spearhead Group members hindered French efforts to further relations through aid and cooperation.

As the recipient of the largest portion of French foreign aid to the South Pacific in 1980, compared to other island states, Vanuatu found itself in a privileged relationship with France. Yet less than a year after independence, political differences between Paris and Port Vila suggested that the distinction might not last. Both in the months before and the years since the election of Mitterrand in 1981, the level of French bilateral aid has reflected the general

health of relations between Paris and Port Vila. A diplomatic incident in the months before the elections of 1981 offered the first example of the relationship between the two elements.

On 2 February 1981, Prime Minister Lini handed Yves Rodriguez, the French Ambassador to Vanuatu, a letter informing him that he was required to leave the country within 24 hours. Rodriguez was also ordered to reduce embassy staff from 13 to five within 48 hours, with the excess personnel likewise being constrained to leave.⁴⁷ The measure represented retaliation for the refusal by French authorities to allow Serge Vohor, the Vanuatu First Secretary, to enter New Caledonia at the end of January. Sixteen hours after being issued with a visa in Port Vila, he and other members of an official delegation were refused entry at Tontouta airport, on the grounds that the intention of the delegation to meet members of the FI constituted interference in local politics.⁴⁸

The dispute called into question the implementation of a series of aid agreements between France and Vanuatu, which had been negotiated in November 1980 but which had yet to be signed. They had been scheduled for signature the day after Rodrigues was expelled, a piece of poor timing by the VP Government. Lini insisted that the expulsions were a matter of national pride, as the treatment of Vohor and his colleagues was an affront to the VP Government.⁴⁹ Stirn, then Secretary of State to Foreign Affairs, indicated that Paris was not going to suffer Lini's retaliation. On 3 February he announced that the 200 French aid workers in Vanuatu would be returned to France.⁵⁰ It was an open-ended threat, in that no timetable was offered for the return of personnel, although 20 of them were instructed to prepare to leave as early as 7 February.⁵¹

The differences between Paris and Port Vila were not to last and the promised withdrawals of aid workers did not occur. Lini, in a belated placatory statement on 8 February, said that he did not wish to see bilateral relations broken, and expressed the hope that the contretemps would be just a transitory one.⁵² Paris elected not to turn its threat into reality and did not, in the end, repatriate all its workers. The incident was set aside in the weeks that followed. By 10 March, the eight aid agreements negotiated in November, worth approximately 46MFF,⁵³ had been signed, and the two countries had officially buried their differences for a future of *entente cordiale*. The agreement declared:

A cette occasion les deux gouvernements affirment leur volonté de promouvoir entre leurs deux pays des relations cordiales fondées sur le respect mutuel du principe de non-ingérence dans les affaires intérieures de l'autre pays.⁵⁴

Both parties consented to protect their respective citizens residing in each other's territories from discrimination and harassment. After the expulsion of expatriates accused of having participated in the attempted secession on Santo Island in 1980, France wanted an assurance that those French citizens who remained in Vanuatu would not be discriminated against, or victimised. Vanuatu wanted similar assurances for ni-Vanuatu living in New Caledonia.

The non-interference undertaking was designed to avoid a repeat of events in February. Both parties to the agreement compromised in order to maintain relations deemed mutually beneficial. Vanuatu agreed to permit French embassy representatives to determine the allocation of the approximately 33MFF which was to be offered to Francophone education in the archipelago, whereas formerly it had insisted that the Vanuatu Ministry of Education should determine which state or private schools were to be recipients of the funds. France showed some patience in concluding negotiations in the absence of an ambassador in Port Vila, and did not press for the return of Rodriguez.⁵⁵

Neither country desired a break in relations. Vanuatu was too dependent on foreign development funding to antagonise France to that extent. In 1980, 41.95% of foreign aid to Vanuatu had been supplied directly by Paris.⁵⁶ French

aid formed a vital component of national development plans to diversify exports and boost the importance of the cash economy in Vanuatu. At independence, the productive capacity of the nation was low by Western standards. Average GNP per capita was \$A452, of which \$A325 was derived from foreign aid transferred to the local cash economy. The value of Vanuatu's exports in 1980, \$A31.40M, was outstripped by aid revenue, which amounted to around \$A38.0M.⁵⁷ Although Vanuatu had gained political sovereignty, it remained in a state of economic dependence on London and Paris which its leaders could disregard only at the peril of national economic health.

French motives for wishing to retain relations with Vanuatu hinged on questions of national prestige and regional influence. Interviewed by FR3 on 20 March 1981, Stirn stated that the aid agreement between France and Vanuatu represented the appeasement of Vanuatu's bitterness over the troubles on Santo during decolonisation. He added that the aid agreements would assure the maintenance of French technical cooperation in the archipelago. The undertaking that neither country would involve itself in the internal problems of the other was portrayed as being of special significance. Stirn claimed "c'est ainsi que le Vanuatu reconnaît tout à fait que la Nouvelle-Calédonie est une terre française".⁵⁸ As later events were to demonstrate, this was a case of wishful thinking.

In spite of local political stirrings, Paris wished to maintain its influence in Vanuatu. The islands, while not representing any great, or even minor, economic or military interest to France, were the only place in the South Pacific outside the TOM where there existed a French-speaking population. In 1979, around 40% of the national population of approximately 120,000 were French-speakers. Paris did not intend to abandon this group, and was concerned that Francophone interests should be assured under the administration of the Anglophone VP Government, which was not notable for its Francophile tendencies. At the time of independence, aid was considered to hold a significant part in maintaining relations with Vanuatu. It was considered that the closer relations were, the more the likelihood of vehement local opposition to France would be reduced. As Jean François-Poncet, then Foreign Minister, replied in answer to a written question dated 16 February 1981:

[...] la politique du Gouvernement en Océanie doit viser à défendre les intérêts politiques et stratégiques importants de la France dans cette zone et protéger les territoires français du Pacifique contre toute tentative d'ingérence extérieure. Cette politique doit s'appuyer sur le développement des relations bilatérales avec les Etats de la région. C'est ainsi qu'en même temps qu'il s'est employé, dès l'indépendance du Vanuatu, à obtenir des autorités de Port Vila les garanties indispensables de sécurité pour nos ressortissants, leurs personnes et leurs biens, le Gouvernement a négocié des accords de coopération culturelle, scientifique et technique ayant pour premier objectif de préserver l'héritage de notre pays dans un Etat où il a été présent pendant de nombreuses années et où une importante partie de la population, notamment au sein de la jeunesse, parle notre langue.⁵⁹

In 1981, the VP considered a referendum on the issue of making English the principal foreign language in Vanuatu. Although the measure was not implemented, it showed that Paris had reason to be wary.⁶⁰ The stipulation that the educational funding under the accords signed in March was to be distributed by the French Embassy was a timely precaution that assured it would not be diverted to Anglophone schooling.

During the period of Socialist administrations from 1981 to 1986, French foreign policy regarding Vanuatu did not change. Cheysson, the first Socialist Foreign Minister during that period, articulated a policy of restraint which was exercised by the Mauroy and Fabius Governments in the face of opposition in Port Vila to French activities in the South Pacific. This opposition

assumed the form of discontent with perceived French slowness to recognise Kanak claims in New Caledonia, and with French nuclear testing. In November 1981, in answer to a written question from Michel Debré, which asserted that Paris should not put up with insulting behaviour from Lini and his subordinates while continuing to dispense aid to Port Vila, and asking why relations should not be reduced, Cheysson declared:

Il ne m'est pas possible de partager votre analyse car, au contraire, je suis convaincu des effets désastreux qu'aurait pour nos intérêts dans le Pacifique Sud une attitude vindicative de la France, contraire à sa tradition et à son image. Toute dégradation de nos relations avec Port Vila aurait pour conséquence la constitution d'un front uni - contre nous - des jeunes Etats du Pacifique qui interpréteraient toute réaction trop vive de notre part comme une humiliation infligée à un gouvernement n'ayant encore qu'une expérience limitée des règles de la vie internationale.⁶¹

France should therefore be patient with the inexperienced leaders of Vanuatu, as it was in the better long-term regional interests of the Fifth Republic. Cheysson had some reason for adopting this stance toward Vanuatu. Papua New Guinea's despatch of troops to Vanuatu to quell separatists on Santo Island in August 1980 was an example of support for Lini in reaction to what was considered to be French-inspired intransigence over decolonisation.

It turned out that Vanuatu too had to be patient. The aid funding agreement concluded in March, the first instalment of which was due to be paid in March, was not paid until September 1981. While French officials in Port Vila blamed bureaucratic complications in Paris, the change in government, and even the summer holidays, Lini's Ministers perceived the delay as French vindictiveness.⁶² They were not above further antagonism themselves. On 1 October 1981, it was announced that Ukeiwé, then the New Caledonian Territorial Vice-President, had been refused permission to attend the South Pacific Commission conference in Port Vila as the head of the New Caledonian delegation. This measure, taken against a Melanesian RPCR leader well known for his opposition to the FI, followed an undertaking by Lini after the death of Pierre Declercq in Nouméa in September 1981. Lini had declared he would intensify the support of his administration for Kanak campaigning against French rule.⁶³ Ukeiwé asserted that the visa refusal should be challenged by the Mauroy Government, as foreign affairs were beyond his jurisdiction under the New Caledonian territorial statute. At that time the Mauroy Government preferred to calm relations rather than antagonise them.

On 12 October 1981, a new Ambassador, Marc Menguy, was appointed to replace Rodrigues.⁶⁴ Unlike his predecessor, Menguy managed to complete his term of office without being summarily evicted by the Lini Government. His appointment appeared to indicate the beginning of a new phase in bilateral relations. From 16 to 21 November 1981 Lini, Kalpokor Kalsakau, his Minister of Finance, and Donald Kolpakas, his Education Minister, visited France to discuss development funding. They were accorded high-level meetings with a range of Socialist Ministers. As well as Mauroy, they met Jean-Pierre Cot, Delegate Minister for Cooperation and Development, Le Pensec, then Minister of the Sea, and Alain Savary, the Minister of Education.⁶⁵ On 9 December 1981, Lini announced that France was to donate approximately 24.1MFF in health and education aid to Vanuatu in the year to come,⁶⁶ an indication that past differences were not to stand in the way of bilateral aid.

French tolerance was likewise evident when Mitterrand accepted the credentials of Barak Sope, Vanuatu's roving ambassador, at the Elysée on 13 May 1982.⁶⁷ The acceptance statement made by Mitterrand pointed out that the occasion was symbolic of the "new quality of the relationship between our two countries" and that past difficulties had been overcome.⁶⁸ Mitterrand held no personal responsibility for these past difficulties and he hoped that under his

presidency France would be able to open a new era of cordial relations with Vanuatu. This presidential observation formed more a combination of wishful thinking and the observance of polite diplomatic formalities than a description of observable reality. Although there had been a change in President and Government in Paris, as there had been no change in French policy on nuclear testing or on New Caledonian self-determination, the hostile attitude of VP leaders to these aspects of the French South Pacific presence had not changed. While Vanuatu was eager to retain aid links, bombastic VP declarations against French and other nations' colonialism had not been abandoned. In December 1981 Sope had addressed a conference at the USP on Vanuatuan foreign policy. He outlined VP policy of support for the decolonisation of all Pacific "peoples", "whether in West Papua, East Timor or French Polynesia", opposition to French "fascism and racism" in New Caledonia. He declared: "The Pacific will only be nuclear-free when it is free of colonialism".⁶⁹ On 23 January 1982, a VP demonstration in Port Vila presented a petition to the French Ambassador demanding an end to French nuclear testing in French Polynesia.⁷⁰

These examples were expressions of the distrust harboured by the VP Government for large foreign powers in general, and of its desire to exert its autonomy and establish Vanuatu as an active, independent participant in international affairs.⁷¹ The antagonism of the VP Government toward what it regarded as neo-colonialism in the region was not limited to France. In May 1987 Lini characterised neo-colonialism from Australia and New Zealand as being just as potentially threatening to the sovereignty of the nation as that of France.⁷² Vanuatu became a full member of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1981, the first South Pacific state to join.⁷³ In the 1980s, Port Vila was to explore the establishment of relations with some unorthodox prospective partners. Governmental contacts with Cuba were established in 1983, and with Vietnam in 1984. None of these links evolved into substantial economic or aid relations.⁷⁴ In April 1987, two Libyan representatives arrived in Port Vila. They reportedly had plans to set up a Libyan diplomatic post there, a prospect viewed with alarm in Canberra, Wellington and Paris. In the event, the pair failed to achieve anything, and were expelled on 7 May for having failed to present their credentials to the VP Government.⁷⁵ Lini refrained from taking the matter further. The fishing agreement signed with the Soviet Union in January 1987 proved short-lived, and was not the precursor of a major Soviet penetration in the region. Relations with these nations, explored in the hope of diversifying Port Vila's aid and economic relations beyond France, Britain and Vanuatu's regional neighbours, did not result in new directions for national development. They served instead to antagonise relations with established aid and trading partners.⁷⁶ On 11 May 1987, responding to reports that Canberra disapproved of any Vanuatuan links with Libya, Lini suspended visits by Australian warships and military aircraft to signal his disapproval of the position held by the Hawke Government. Days before, Lini had asserted that as a sovereign nation Vanuatu had the right to form links with whomever it chose.⁷⁷ In the absence of closer relations with Libya, Vanuatu permitted Australian visits to resume, the first of which was made by a patrol boat in August 1987.⁷⁸

It is unlikely that Mitterrand would have been unadvised of the foreign policy articulated by Sope, but he and the Mauroy Government chose to overlook it in preference to consolidating ties with Vanuatu. On 26 May 1982 the French Council of Ministers approved cultural, scientific and technical cooperation accords with Vanuatu which, along with the aid accord of March 1981, were promulgated on 20 October 1982.⁷⁹ From 12 to 19 July, a visit to Paris by Ati George Sokomanu, the President of Vanuatu, continued high level contacts. Sokomanu met Mitterrand on 15 July, and Cheysson four days later.⁸⁰ Sokomanu was less dogmatic than Sope, and articulated moderate views on relations with France. He had criticised Lini for refusing to allow the entry of Ukeiwé into Vanuatu in 1981 as unnecessarily provocative, and did not agree

with much of the VP's militant foreign policy views.⁸¹ Sokomanu was one of those English-speaking, Protestant-educated, British-trained island leaders whose conciliatory attitude towards France undermined the Anglo-Saxon Protestant conspiracy theory voiced by certain conservative French commentators. He saw his role as President as that of encouraging national unity between Francophones and Anglophones.⁸² He was not convinced that Lini and his Ministers were acting in the best interests of the national economy when they took abrupt foreign policy actions. In this respect he shared the views of the largely Francophone leaders of the opposition UMP in Vanuatu.

Moderation was granted a lower priority in government circles in Port Vila. The unilateral declaration of sovereignty over Matthew and Hunter Islands made by the Lini Government in March 1983 exacerbated Franco-Vanuatu relations. The action was rendered ineffective by the installation of a French garrison to assure the sovereignty of the Fifth Republic over these desolate islets. Djoud's declaration in March 1981 that Vanuatu had agreed not to interfere in French internal affairs sounded increasingly hollow as Lini campaigned from 1980 for the South Pacific Forum to voice support for Kanak demands in New Caledonia, and to take the territory's case to the UN decolonisation committee.

Lini presented himself as the unstinting supporter of Kanak nationalism, acting in pan-Melanesian solidarity with those who still remained subject to French control. When he was asked in 1982 how far he was prepared to go to support New Caledonian Kanaks, he boldly stated: "Je suis prêt à aller aussi loin que possible et aussi longtemps qu'il le sera nécessaire. [...] C'est mon devoir moral de Mélanésien d'agir ainsi et de prouver que ce territoire doit accéder à l'indépendance plus rapidement que ne le pensent certaines personnes."⁸³ Unabashedly pro-FI and later pro-FLNKS, Lini publicly attributed responsibility for New Caledonian problems to the French Government, which he described as resistant to change.⁸⁴ He portrayed decolonisation as the sole solution to New Caledonia's divisions, ignoring the complex ethnic balance, and the absence of majority electoral support for independence.⁸⁵

In November 1984 Lini backed the provisional government of Kanaky as the basis for an independent state in New Caledonia.⁸⁶ During their visits to Vanuatu to lobby for international support, from November 1984 to early 1985,⁸⁷ FLNKS leaders such as Tjibaou and Yann Céléne Uregei predictably found Port Vila to be the foreign capital most in tune with their outlook, mainly due to Vanuatu's experience of French colonialism, which set it apart from the other Melanesian states. While VP Government representatives offered them verbal support, and lobbied the South Pacific Forum, there were limits to Vanuatu campaigning for the FLNKS. Lini admitted that he was not prepared to offer Port Vila as the base for a Kanak government in exile for fear of alienating the French.⁸⁸ There is no evidence of any material support offered by Port Vila to Kanak activists. Vanuatu leaders lacked the means, either to offer clandestine military assistance of any consequence, or to impose economic sanctions on France. The formal abandonment of the FLNKS boycott from May 1985 to cooperate with the French State under the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute meant that these options were not to become even remote prospects. The VP Prime Minister was slow to respond to FLNKS pragmatism. In August 1985, Lini predicted that the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute was destined to fail.⁸⁹ He later changed his mind, and told the UN General Assembly in October 1985 that France should be given more time for its "decolonisation".⁹⁰ Vanuatu exercised some moderation of its previous support for immediate decolonisation. While the FLNKS was collaborating with the French State it would have been incongruous to have actively maintained a militant posture.

While the Mauroy and Fabius Governments did not view positively Vanuatu lobbying for the FLNKS, they did not waver from the standing policy of assisting Vanuatu to assure French regional interests. For Paris, the

importance of the maintenance of its regional presence outweighed the marginal pressure of VP Government lobbying over New Caledonia. Substantial amounts of French aid continued to be transferred to Port Vila. On 8 December 1985 France finalised a loan of 78MFF to Vanuatu for coffee plantation development on the island of Tanna. Philippe Baude, then the French Ambassador to Vanuatu, signed the agreement in Port Vila.⁹¹ On 1 January 1986, Baude presented a cheque worth 10.17MFF to the Vanuatu Ministry of Health for the renovation of the Georges Pompidou Hospital in Port Vila.⁹² Mauroy and Fabius alike refrained from implementing sanctions against Vanuatu for its stance regarding Kanak nationalism.

France's tolerance of Vanuatu solidarity with the FLNKS continued into the period of cohabitation. Restraint was exercised in Paris in spite of provocative actions and adverse comments from Lini about reforms instituted for New Caledonia under Chirac. For instance, in September 1986 Lini presented the FLNKS's case to the Non-Aligned Movement summit at Harere, Zimbabwe, and gained the approval of the Movement to take the issue to the UN.⁹³ Lini referred to the "apartheid" in New Caledonia while speaking at the UN in October 1986, and pleaded for the cause of the FLNKS.⁹⁴ Opposition to French policy persisted into 1987. The VP and a variety of church, lobby and social groups in Port Vila responded to the New Caledonian self-determination referendum by organising a demonstration outside the French Embassy on 13 September and presenting a petition calling for the abandonment of the vote.⁹⁵ The Foreign Minister of the day, Sela Molisa, condemned France for staging the referendum and praised the FLNKS abstention.⁹⁶

A greater challenge to French restraint was presented by Vanuatu's notice of expulsion served on 1 October 1987 to another French Ambassador in Port Vila, Henri Crépin-Leblond, as well as to the head of the Cooperation Mission, Denis Pelbois. They were claimed to have interfered in local politics by allegedly channelling finance to the Francophone UMP. Although Lini claimed to have irrefutable proof of this allegation, he failed to present it.⁹⁷ Hours after the announcement, the Quai d'Orsay announced that there would be "un réexamen de l'ensemble de la coopération avec le Vanuatu".⁹⁸

In 1986 the Chirac Government had already decided on a redistribution of French aid to the South Pacific.⁹⁹ French aid to Vanuatu dropped from 64.7MFF allocated in the 1986 budget, to 28.3MFF in the 1987 budget.¹⁰⁰ Vanuatu's expulsion of Crépin-Leblond and Pelbois served to aggravate matters. Pons stated while in New Caledonia on 2 October that the expulsions showed "une escalade de radicalisation" was under way in Port Vila; "Je ne peux que le regretter pour le Vanuatu."¹⁰¹ Funding that had been allocated to Port Vila was diverted for distribution elsewhere, notably from September 1987 to the new Republic of Fiji, which was in need of foreign aid as Australian and New Zealand programmes there had been either cut or suspended. Funds allocated to Vanuatu dropped sharply from 60.4% of the French bilateral aid budget for the South Pacific in 1987, to 27.02% of the budget for 1988.¹⁰² As had been the case in February 1981 after the expulsion of Rodriguez, France could not take the traditional retaliatory action of expelling the Ambassador to Paris, as Port Vila had no permanent representation there. Its sole permanent overseas diplomat was Robert Van Lierop, a private consultant paid to represent Vanuatu at the UN General Assembly.¹⁰³ The reduction of aid thus served as French reprisal.

Lini was unrepentant: on 3 November 1987 three more French diplomats were expelled from Port Vila on similar charges of interfering in local politics. The domestic political context of the period had bearing on these and earlier expulsions. The accusation that the UMP was dealing with the French was aimed to discredit it in the weeks before the general elections scheduled for 30 November. Lini faced a dual challenge to the renewal of his mandate, from both the UMP and Sope. As VP Secretary-General, in July 1987 Sope had

unsuccessfully contested the re-election of Lini as VP President.¹⁰⁴ The UMP and Sope advocated improving relations with France, the latter having moderated his earlier hostility to French colonialism. Lini's refusal to reconcile with Paris distinguished him from his opponents. After the Prime Minister had a stroke in February, opponents of Lini characterised him as unfit to lead the nation. The articulation of militant foreign policy positions was one of the stances which exercised enough appeal among VP supporters and members to permit the re-election of a six member VP majority in Parliament, and to allow the formation of a new government led by Lini on 15 December 1987.

Lini held on to political power, but was constrained to bear the consequences of his actions. Paris responded to the various expulsions by cutting back its diplomatic staff, and by withdrawing 30 aid workers. A skeleton staff of two was left at the French Embassy in Port Vila.¹⁰⁵ Although bilateral relations had not been broken, the extent of the displeasure of the Chirac Government with the VP Government was clear. Attitudes did not immediately change in Paris with the arrival of the Rocard Government in 1988. French aid continued to be dispensed at a reduced level, totalling 29.6MFF per annum by 1989.¹⁰⁶ At that time, the total number of French aid workers in Vanuatu was 61, of whom 51 were employed as teachers in Vanuatu schools. The remaining ten were working in agricultural development.¹⁰⁷

Lini continued to pillory French conduct in New Caledonia after the departure of the Chirac Government in May 1988. In April 1988 both Lini and Donald Kalpokas, his Foreign Minister at that time, had attributed blame for the violence in New Caledonia to Chirac and his Ministers.¹⁰⁸ The VP demonstration which attempted to prevent French residents from voting at the Port Vila Embassy during the second round of the French presidential elections took place in this climate of disapproval. The VP Government did not exhibit much concern about the promotion of détente with Paris from April to May 1988. The end of cohabitation and the return of the Socialists to power in Paris did not greatly change relations. The VP Government was the major critic of the Matignon Accords within the South Pacific Forum, berating them for not guaranteeing independence to Kanaks, and holding that 1998 was too long to wait until a self-determination vote.¹⁰⁹ In November 1988, Lini reiterated VP calls for the unconditional decolonisation of New Caledonia, even though the FLNKS had abandoned that stance by its signature of the Matignon Accords.¹¹⁰ Just as the VP was slow to rally to approve the implementation of the Accords, so too the Rocard Government was slow to restore aid funding to Port Vila. Bilateral aid dropped from the level of 29.6MFF in 1989 to 25MFF in 1990, and 20.9MFF in 1991.¹¹¹

The economic price for the expression of an independent foreign policy in the 1980s had been high. While Lini had demonstrated his capacity to champion Kanak nationalism in international fora, Vanuatu economic dependence was not reduced under his leadership. In its first National Development Plan for 1982 to 1986, the Lini Government had declared the ambitious target of obtaining economic self-sufficiency within ten to 15 years.¹¹² By the end of the 1980s, it was apparent that this target was not likely to be achieved within that period. In 1989, foreign aid still accounted for around 50% of government revenue.¹¹³ By 1991 the national trade deficit was approximately Vt9,200M. The value of exports totalled around Vt1,600M, while imports were worth around Vt10,800M.¹¹⁴ Lini's administrations had not managed to stimulate local production to the extent desired.

Two key sectors of the economy experienced a marked decline after independence. Tourism, the income earner with the best chances of rapid expansion, proved disappointing. In the absence of an established international reputation, a well-developed hotel industry, and for want of good marketing, tourist arrivals fell from around 32,000 in 1982 to 14,600 in 1987.¹¹⁵ Since then, concerted efforts to improve facilities and to advertise overseas have

reaped benefits. The number of tourist arrivals rose to 31,047 in 1989, 45% of whom were Australian.¹¹⁶ As is the case in the Pacific TOM, tourism in Vanuatu has yet to realise the potential expected of it, and has not provided economic salvation.

Copra exports, the single most important Vanuatu crop, collapsed in the 1980s. The departure of most French plantation owners during decolonisation had a disastrous effect on copra production, which fell from almost 40,000t in 1979 to just under 27,000t in 1980.¹¹⁷ This decline continued after independence due to a combination of elements. Lack of careful management resulted in the production of lower quality copra after independence, while the reduced number of experienced plantation owners affected harvest levels. The market price for the commodity also fell in the 1980s, from \$US598 per tonne in 1984 to \$US204 in 1987. The combined result was lower production levels, both because of lower productive capacity, and due to lower returns on the international market. In 1984, 46,682t were exported, worth \$US27.76M. In 1987, 31,846t were exported, worth \$US6.49M.¹¹⁸

The state of the national economy led President Sokomanu to open Parliament on 28 March 1988 with a call for Lini to normalise relations with France. He declared that it was in the better interests of Vanuatu to restore full relations with France, as its cooperation was needed for economic development. Maxime Carlot, the UMP leader of the Opposition, agreed with these statements and added that Vanuatu should set its own internal affairs in order before venturing to criticise France over New Caledonia.¹¹⁹

The restoration of full relations with France was to take over four years. The first sign that substantial improvements were to occur came when Kalpokas, as Lini's Foreign Minister, made an official visit to Paris, from 12 to 15 November 1989, to discuss the restoration of aid and diplomatic representation. He met with Rocard, Le Pensec and with Edwige Avice, Delegate Minister to Foreign Affairs. Kalpokas managed to voice more positive comments about the Matignon Accords than Lini had in 1988, saying that they offered Kanaks a chance to gain their autonomy and that the agreement promoted peace and stability.¹²⁰ By 1990, Lini was publicly supportive of an immediate resumption of full relations with France and increased aid.¹²¹ Whereas in previous years he had been less concerned, the easing of tensions over New Caledonia, combined with Vanuatu's need for development funding, brought about a change in attitude. Symbolic of slowly dawning reconciliation was the presence of Le Pensec as the French representative at the tenth anniversary of independence in July 1990. Le Pensec declared in his speech for the occasion that the appointment of a French ambassador was a more immediate likelihood than it had been. Lini in turn declared his gratitude for French and British aid. Le Pensec was the first French Minister to have visited the archipelago since independence.¹²²

It was not until the demise of the VP Government that reconciliation between Paris and Port Vila developed further. In 1991 the VP split over Lini's conduct as party leader. His behaviour had become increasingly erratic since his stroke in 1987. He had riposted against rising internal opposition by dismissing various government ministers, and by expelling dissidents from the VP. These methods failed to prevent his removal as VP leader and as Prime Minister.¹²³ After having gained election to the presidency of the VP, on 6 September 1991, Donald Kalpokas was elected Prime Minister by the Parliament. The general elections held on 2 December 1991 changed further the face of Vanuatu's government. The Kalpokas Government was defeated by the UMP. Some exceedingly pragmatic alliance building ensued, of the sort commonplace in French Polynesian politics. Combining with Lini's newly created National United Party, on 16 December Carlot formed a predominantly Francophone

coalition government which regarded Paris far less antagonistically than had done the VP Governments of the 1980s.¹²⁴

Carlot exercised a more conservative approach to international affairs than Lini. As the Vanuatu representative of the World Anti-Communist League,¹²⁵ he had had little sympathy for VP attempts at forming relations with Cuba, the Soviet Union and Vietnam in the 1980s. Past emphasis on non-alignment was abandoned. Carlot permitted the participation of Vanuatu in the Non-Aligned Movement to lapse by neglecting to send a delegation to its summit at Jakarta in 1992.¹²⁶ In December 1993, Carlot dismissed Van Lierop as the Vanuatu representative to the UN, replacing him with Jean Ravou-Akii, an expatriate New Hebridean who had been living in New Caledonia since the Santo rebellion in 1980.¹²⁷ As a Francophone and a Francophile, as well as being the Prime Minister of a tiny country in deep deficit and with a collapsed economy, Carlot was disinclined to berate French regional policy as vehemently as Lini had in the 1980s. However there persisted a governmental willingness to act imprudently toward major foreign aid donors. Claims by Carlot of foreign interference have been directed at Anglophone nations rather than at France, while retaining the same potential to be damaging to the economy of Vanuatu. While trying to form his coalition government in December 1991, Carlot accused Australian, New Zealand and British diplomatic staff in Port Vila of opposing his progress because they did not wish to see an upturn in French influence in Vanuatu.¹²⁸ This unsubstantiated allegation held the same appeal to Carlot's Francophone support base as Lini's anti-French pronouncements had exercised on VP followers in the 1980s. In July 1992, Vanuatu expelled James Pearson, the Australian Ambassador. Pearson's offence was to have voiced Australian criticism of a new investment law, which was interpreted as being possibly discriminatory to Australian investors.¹²⁹ The incident resulted in mild reprisals compared to past French reactions. Prime Minister Keating banned naval visits, ministerial and other high level contacts with Vanuatu until 31 December 1992.¹³⁰ To the extent that Carlot retaliated against what he perceived as foreign interference in domestic affairs, his foreign policy was no different from that of Lini.

On the issues of French nuclear testing and New Caledonia, Carlot was restrained, and cautious not to offend Paris. During a visit to New Zealand in early April 1992, Carlot observed that although nuclear testing was a problem, the positive aspects of the French role in the Pacific had been largely overlooked by the regional media. His Government had made no decision to formally oppose nuclear testing, he said, and was more preoccupied with internal problems such as the welfare and the education of ni-Vanuatu.¹³¹ Shortly after the announcement of the French test suspension removed any pressing need for Port Vila to take an individual stand on nuclear testing, although it has supported South Pacific Forum calls for the extension of the suspension into a general moratorium on testing. Carlot's policy on New Caledonia has facilitated better relations with France. Carlot regarded the question of the future of New Caledonia as an internal matter to be settled between France and New Caledonian political leaders.¹³² At the end of 1991 Serge Vohor, his Foreign Minister, had commented "Ce n'est pas notre devoir de nous ingérer dans les affaires internes d'un autre pays."¹³³ Carlot was reported in January 1992 as having confidence in the implementation of the Matignon Accords as the solution to New Caledonia's internal problems.¹³⁴ Almost ten years after Dijoud stated that Vanuatu had recognised New Caledonia as an internal matter, Port Vila had finally officially adopted that position. During Carlot's tour of New Caledonia from 19 to 24 April 1993, Néaoutyine, as FLNKS President, refused to meet Carlot because of the Vanuatu Government's abandonment of support for Kanak independence.¹³⁵ Carlot stated his position upon his return to Port Vila: his administration did not back the cause of the FLNKS, as to do so would constitute interference in the domestic affairs of France. Carlot did however back

the Matignon Accords as the path to a peaceful resolution of New Caledonia's problems. This support was assumed not to constitute interference in domestic politics as the Accords allowed territorial cooperation with foreign nations such as Vanuatu.¹³⁶

VP critics pointed out that Carlot had ulterior motives for handling these two issues cautiously, as he wished to re-establish good relations with France,¹³⁷ which would be the necessary precondition to the upgrading of French aid. One of his Government's first gestures of good-will to Paris was the lifting on 31 December 1991 of the expulsion orders imposed on various French expatriates who had been accused of involvement in the Santo troubles in 1980.¹³⁸ This undertaking was little more than a gesture, as it was unlikely after over a decade that the people concerned by it would be prepared to return.

This New Year's resolution opened an eventful year for Franco-Vanuatu relations. In February 1992, Carlot announced that he had asked Vice-Admiral Querat, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Pacific Naval Squadron, for French naval assistance in the surveillance of the Vanuatu EEZ, as a supplement to Australian assistance. The proposal was accepted, and led to an arrangement for 30 hours' worth of aerial surveillance annually.¹³⁹ Such military cooperation would have been unthinkable under a VP Government in the 1980s. From 11 to 20 May 1992 Carlot led a government delegation in Paris, the first call there by a Vanuatu head of government since Lini's stay in November 1981. Although the theft of the delegation's passports and other documentation in a Parisian restaurant forced the abandonment of a scheduled meeting with John Major, the British Prime Minister,¹⁴⁰ a meeting with Bérégovoy did take place. The party returned to Port Vila with an undertaking of 10MFF in French supplementary aid for small projects in various sectors, as well as for the establishment of a television network.¹⁴¹ During its visit, the delegation was informed that the Quai d'Orsay was considering who to appoint as Ambassador to Port Vila, and would consult Carlot in weeks to come.¹⁴² This information represented the first sign of substantial progress over French diplomatic representation at Port Vila since Kalpokas had made the first official request for the reappointment of a French Ambassador on behalf of the VP Government in August 1990.¹⁴³ The appointment of Jean Mazeo, a career diplomat, was announced on 1 September 1992.¹⁴⁴ From 1991 to 1993 French bilateral aid to Vanuatu rose. Whereas in 1991, total bilateral funding had been 20.9MFF, in 1992 it reached 21.4MFF (as well as a Treasury loan of 3.5MFF), and 23.1MFF in 1993.¹⁴⁵

Assuming that Carlot can maintain power, Franco-Vanuatu relations in the 1990s are likely to continue improving. With the removal of past tensions, the way lies open for the restoration of French aid to Port Vila, and the more active promotion of French culture and influence in the only Francophone nation in the South Pacific. Two events in late 1992 offered evidence of changing times. On 28 August, the first director of the newly-established Alliance française in Port Vila arrived to take up her posting.¹⁴⁶ Although a non-governmental body, the Alliance française is recognised by the French State as a major promotor of French culture and language, and is a recipient of state funding. In December Vohor concluded an exchange agreement permitting French teachers to assist in Francophone education in Vanuatu.¹⁴⁷ French participation in local education had dwindled in the 1980s. This agreement offered a new lease of life to the teaching of a language that had not been considered a high priority under Lini.

While the fortunes of French relations with Vanuatu fluctuated in the period under consideration, Paris refrained from severing ties with Port Vila, perhaps in the hope that the end of the VP's time in government would come and that an administration more amenable to French interests would be installed. France had continued links, however reduced, in the face of VP pronouncements because of its established presence in the archipelago, and the

existence of a sympathetic Francophone community there. In this respect, Vanuatu initially enjoyed privileged status among island states in the South Pacific. VP foreign policy conduct tested the diplomatic resolve of Paris to maintain relations, although not to any great extent. Diplomatic squabbles with Vanuatu since 1980 were far less troublesome for French Governments and the staff of the Quai d'Orsay than maintaining relations with, say, Chad in the early 1980s, Lebanon in 1983, Iraq in 1991, or Algeria in 1993. Having endured various contretemps with Port Vila, in the early 1990s the way was open for more cordial relations, enabling the reinforcement of French influence in Vanuatu.

Whereas in the course of the 1980s, the improvement of relations with Fiji and the Polynesian island states of the South Pacific displaced the importance of Vanuatu in French aid distribution, of the three founding members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group, Vanuatu remained the only country with substantial links to Paris into the 1990s. The absence of any heritage of a French presence in the Solomon Islands and in Papua New Guinea, along with the animosity of these two nations to French regional policy, combined to limit the development of French relations.

The Solomon Islands was the Spearhead Group member with which France had the least important bilateral relationship. Although diplomatic relations had been established between Honiara and Paris in 1978,¹⁴⁸ the ambivalence of the Solomon Islanders to France prevented any great progress during the 1980s. In January 1982, the Government of Solomon Mamaloni cancelled a visit by Menguy from Port Vila. It had been intended that the French Ambassador to Vanuatu would present his credentials at Honiara, until Ezekiel Alebua, the Solomons Foreign Minister, said that accreditation would be postponed due to the risk of violent protests in the streets.¹⁴⁹ Mamaloni did not want to be seen negotiating with France in the face of popular opposition. During a visit by Mamaloni to Port Vila in July 1983 on the occasion of celebrations of the anniversary of Vanuatu independence, Menguy suggested another attempt at presenting his credentials. Mamaloni refused.¹⁵⁰ No haste was shown to discard this reluctance. In October 1986, eight years after the Solomon Islands had established diplomatic relations with France, the Cabinet of Prime Minister Peter Kenilorea, Mamaloni's successor, decided to accept the credentials of the French Ambassador to Vanuatu. Unfortunately for French relations, actual accreditation was yet again postponed because of the effects of domestic opposition to the extension of diplomatic links with France.

Flosse's first major rapid aid intervention as Secretary of State to the South Pacific had occurred in May 1986 in the aftermath of cyclone Namu. In the Solomons, 90,000 people were rendered homeless. Flosse oversaw the arrival of French disaster relief. The *Jacques Cartier* arrived from New Caledonia laden with machinery and military personnel to assist with recovery work. Two French medical teams were also sent, along with 20t of food and 1t of medicine. In all, 1MFF was allocated by Flosse for disaster relief work in the Solomons.¹⁵¹ It was during this operation that Flosse established contacts with Kenilorea. Among the French aid Flosse dispensed in the aftermath of cyclone Namu, \$S129,000 had been allotted for the reconstruction of a school and private housing in Rara, the village where Kenilorea lived. Kenilorea defended himself from allegations of corruption from his party colleagues and the Opposition by pointing out that he was not the personal beneficiary of French funds, and that although he had six children, none of them attended Rara School. After he admitted that Rara was in his constituency, he declared that its population was too small to affect his electoral following.¹⁵² Three parliamentarians in Kenilorea's Nationalist Front for Progress resigned to protest this use of French funds, threatening his majority support in Parliament. On 17 November 1986, Kenilorea resigned as head of government in recognition of the unpopularity of what was perceived to be his conciliatory

attitude to France, even though he did not accept allegations concerning misappropriation of funds.¹⁵³ Kenilorea's resignation in November 1986, stemming from his acceptance of French aid, was a sign of the unpopularity of closer relations with Paris that the recognition of the Ambassador from Port Vila would have marked.

His replacement, Alebua, periodically decried French policy in the following months. He reiterated the support of the Solomon Islands for the FLNKS and decried "France's colonial attitude" in the South Pacific.¹⁵⁴ The coincidental timing of South Pacific Forum lobbying in the UN in December 1986 gave the impression that under Alebua the Solomon Islands were having greater influence on New Caledonian policy, and were more active in assisting the FLNKS.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless Kenilorea too had criticised French handling of New Caledonian issues and had advocated action at the UN as early as 1981.¹⁵⁶ Opposition to France voiced by Prime Minister Alebua, and the expulsion of Crépin-Leblond from Port Vila in October 1987, effectively excluded any prospect of French accreditation occurring via Vanuatu.¹⁵⁷ Alebua's comments from late 1986 also provoked a French reaction.

In June 1987, France blocked Wilson Ifunaoa, the Solomon Islands roving ambassador, from presenting his credentials to the EEC in Brussels. Every member of the EEC Council except France was prepared to accredit Ifunaoa. British representatives claimed that France was reacting against the anti-nuclear and anti-colonial policies held by the Solomons.¹⁵⁸ The refusal may have been a negative reaction merely to the prior refusal of French accreditation in Honiara. It was not until 1990 that the French Ambassador to Port Moresby presented his credentials at Honiara and opened the way for more substantial bilateral relations.¹⁵⁹ Without stable diplomatic links, French relations with the Solomon Islands did not progress greatly from 1980. This lack of progress did not necessarily concern Paris and, unlike Vanuatu, the Solomons could afford to ignore France. Apart from French aid received via multilateral sources such as the South Pacific Commission and the Lomé Convention, the country had no substantial aid relationship with France. Substantial economic relations did not exist either. Although the arrival of French development assistance or investment would have been a useful supplement to existing sources, this prospect was not considered as important in Honiara as solidarity with the FLNKS and opposition to nuclear testing.

Stirn's visit to Port Moresby in January 1980 clearly suggested that relations between Papua New Guinea and France were to expand during the decade to follow. He announced a soft loan worth 20MFF to the PNG Government, proposals for increased technical aid, and the arrival of the first resident French Ambassador to Port Moresby in February.¹⁶⁰ Yet the barriers to improved bilateral relations that existed also surfaced during this call. Stirn informed Ebia Olewale, the Deputy Prime Minister, that PNG advocacy of taking New Caledonia's case to the UN decolonisation committee would be divisive and that France would simply ignore any UN resolutions concerning the territory. He rejected PNG support for Kanak primacy and pointed out that France would only accord independence if a majority of the New Caledonian electorate desired it.¹⁶¹ The conduct of successive French Governments in the 1980s bore out the veracity of his comments.

While French Ambassadors in Port Moresby did not experience the treatment meted out to their counterparts in Port Vila, Papua New Guinea shared the militant positions of Vanuatu, advocating French decolonisation and opposing French nuclear testing.¹⁶² Papua New Guinea, with Australian funding, offered material support to Vanuatu when Lini was faced with internal unrest in 1980. The expedition at Lini's request of Kumul Force, a detachment of the PNG Defence Force, to quell the secession attempt on Santo opened close political cooperation between Port Moresby and Port Vila.¹⁶³

PNG cooperation with France was not so close. In the 1980s French representatives expressed the hope of expanding French cooperation and investment in Papua New Guinea beyond the minor extent then current.¹⁶⁴ There was little sign of great progress in bringing such hopes to fruition in that decade. While Papua New Guinea possessed the largest economy and population of the South Pacific island states, this was not reflected in French aid funding. For 1987, the country was allocated 1.7MFF in bilateral aid by France, constituting 1.6% of the total French bilateral aid budget in the South Pacific for that year, 107.1MFF.¹⁶⁵ The first French trade mission to Port Moresby was not organised until November 1991.¹⁶⁶ Major French contacts in these areas had yet to be formed 17 years after the independence of Papua New Guinea. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s bilateral trade fluctuated. In 1988, France exported 25.45MFF worth of goods to Papua New Guinea, while it imported 65.76MFF.¹⁶⁷ In 1991 the respective totals were 34.17MFF and 30.40MFF. By 1992, annual French exports to the country were worth 22.44MFF, while imports from Papua New Guinea were valued at 31.66MFF.¹⁶⁸ At the time of the signature of a cooperation agreement between the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce and the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia, Bernard Ould Yahoui, the French Trade Commissioner in Canberra, stated that there were ten French companies operating in Papua New Guinea.¹⁶⁹ In the 1990s, Australian, Japanese, and British investment and aid formed the bulk of Papua New Guinea's sources of revenue, while the French contribution formed a minor proportion.¹⁷⁰ In spite of the fact that after Australia and New Zealand, Papua New Guinea has the largest population of the South Pacific states, has the greatest mineral resources, and the potential for major economic development, French interests have not played a great role in the economic growth of the country.

In December 1988, Steven Mokis, the PNG Secretary of Defence, described his country's bilateral relations with France as "lukewarm".¹⁷¹ It was an apt characterisation. Events in the 1990s suggested that some mutual sentiment existed in Paris, despite talk there since 1981 of expanding French relations with the South Pacific. The intention announced in March 1991 of closing the French Embassy in Port Moresby as part of austerity measures by the Quai d'Orsay¹⁷² was a reflection of the low esteem in which the post was held in Paris, and of the lack of progress that diplomats had been able to make during the previous decade. The subsequent abandonment of the plan to close the post showed that this pessimism did not prevail, although it had yet to be shown as unfounded by 1993. Ironically, there was fleeting sign of greater interest in maintaining relations on the part of Papua New Guinea in the early 1990s. Sir Michael Somare, the PNG Foreign Affairs Minister, announced in March 1992 that Andrew Yaueb had been appointed resident Ambassador in Paris, mainly to solicit French mining investment and agricultural assistance.¹⁷³ This link was not to last. In June 1993, Prime Minister Paias Wingti announced that the Embassy in Paris was being closed. As was the case with its French counterpart, budgetary reasons were cited. The opening of new PNG Consulates in Australia announced at the same time suggests that Wingti was redeploying his diplomatic funding and staff to more promising areas of commercial activity for Port Moresby.¹⁷⁴ Wavering diplomatic intentions in Paris and Port Moresby confirmed that bilateral relations were still "lukewarm" in the 1990s.

In the cases of Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, the term cheque-book diplomacy has little, if any, validity. The VP Governments of the 1980s exercised foreign policy that ran counter to French regional interests regardless of the threat of the reduction of French development assistance. Lini exercised an irresponsible disregard for financial considerations during the 1980s. Paris, on the other hand, showed no great haste in dispensing greater funding and reinstating its diplomatic representation in Port Vila once

tensions had calmed during the early 1990s. As far as the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea were concerned, close relations were not cemented due to local resentment of French nuclear policy and anti-colonialism. French relations with the founding members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group exhibited an ambivalence punctuated by tempestuous disputes, snubs and missed opportunities. Under such circumstances, the spread of French influence, facilitated by the distribution of development assistance, was not possible for much of the period under consideration. The development of better French relations with Vanuatu since the appointment of the Carlot Government in December 1991 provided an exception to this characterisation. Such an improvement might be indicative of a future norm in French relations with the other members of the Melanesian Spearhead Group, provided that no resurgence in pan-Melanesian hostility over French policy in New Caledonia occurs.

Developing Relations with Fiji and Polynesia

During the 1980s French relations with Fiji and its Polynesian neighbours became more harmonious than was the case with the founders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group. While French diplomacy experienced indifferent progress in the latter's case, other island governments had fewer qualms about accepting French development aid. Fiji and the Polynesian members of the South Pacific Forum, while voicing varying degrees of anti-nuclear and anti-colonialist sentiment, were generally less abrupt in their dealings with French representatives than the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

The most important example was that of Fiji. It was unfortunate for Lini that his altercations with French ambassadorial staff at Port Vila occurred at the same time as Flosse was actively working to improve French aid relations with other South Pacific nations. The first Fijian coup d'état occurred just one day before the meeting of 15 to 17 May 1987 in Nouméa, at which French ambassadors and senior officials in the Pacific greeted Flosse's announcement of the goal of increased French regional cooperation. Part of the discussions concerned the Fijian coup, and what response France should make. Pons expressed some disapproval of the coup from a democratic viewpoint, but was largely non-committal.¹⁷⁵

It turned out that for the Chirac Government the promotion of democratic values was subordinate to the furtherance of French regional influence. To a great degree, the coup was advantageous for France. Relations between France and Fiji appeared to be on the verge of deterioration at the election of Bavadra in April 1987. Bavadra had been elected on a policy platform which, among other issues, stressed the need for more vigorous Fijian opposition to nuclear arms. One of the first decisions made by Bavadra's administration, hours after his appointment as Prime Minister, was to forbid US warship visits on the grounds that Washington would not confirm whether such vessels were nuclear armed or not.¹⁷⁶ Since the 1970s governments led by Mara had been the subject of repeated criticism from the Fijian anti-nuclear movement. Groups supporting Bavadra included the Pacific Council of Churches, the YWCA, the USP Students' Association, and the Fiji Anti-Nuclear Group, which advocated boycotts of French products and reducing diplomatic links with Paris as part of their campaigning for a nuclear free, independent Pacific. Rabuka's coup allowed the return of Mara and his colleagues to government.

From May 1987 Fiji offered an expedient candidate for better bilateral relations. In the wake of the coup d'état of May 1987, Fiji's most important aid donors, Australia and New Zealand, suspended development aid and military cooperation to signal disapproval of the overthrow of the constitutionally elected Government of Bavadra. The United States likewise withdrew military support,¹⁷⁷ a major setback as much of the equipment used by the Fijian Army was of American manufacture. Washington did not cut other links, and

promised aid if Australian and New Zealand enacted trade embargoes.¹⁷⁸ Rabuka was constrained to consider other sources to fill the gap these sanctions created. The question of French assistance was raised during Flosse's stop in Suva from 14 to 15 August.¹⁷⁹ During his stay, Flosse announced that France intended to develop its aid to Suva, which was to include military aid.¹⁸⁰ His presence resulted in some speculation, including the unfounded rumour that France intended to build a naval base near Suva.¹⁸¹

Unlike Wellington and Canberra, Paris had not condemned the coup d'état in May. Long experience of similar situations in dealings with African states had resulted in France adopting a different approach when confronted with the overthrow of a foreign government. Standing policy was to recognise states rather than the governments ruling them, thus dispensing with the problem of determining whether constitutionally dubious governments merited diplomatic recognition.¹⁸² Generally this approach had served Paris well, although not always. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish who was the commanding claimant to state authority. The civil war in Chad in the early 1980s had forced Paris to switch allegiance from one side to another as the opposing factions of Hissène Habré and Goukouni Oueddei gained and lost control of N'djamena, the capital. As a result Paris appeared fickle in its allegiances.

In Suva there was no opposition which threatened the new regime, so France faced no such difficulties in establishing dialogue. In August 1987 Flosse was able to talk to Rabuka as the Fijian head of state with no qualms that the coup instigator might himself soon be overthrown, at a time when his regime was being snubbed by Australian and New Zealand representatives. After the second coup on 25 September, and Rabuka's proclamation of the Republic of Fiji, the French Embassy in Suva informed Dr Jona Senilagakali, the Fijian Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs, that France was prepared to maintain relations with Fiji.¹⁸³ This was welcome news compared to protests from Wellington and Canberra. The Australian and New Zealand positions in this instance were based on different criteria. As the leaders of centre-Left Labour parties, Lange and Hawke felt sympathy for Bavadra rather than for Rabuka. And as Prime Ministers of Commonwealth nations, Hawke and Lange felt themselves obliged to some extent to protest the affront that the Republic presented to the authority of the British monarchy, and to its local representative, the Governor-General. Sir Ratu Penaia Ganilau was less vigorous in this regard, as was Mara, one of the founders of the Fijian Constitution of 1970, which had been overridden by the creation of the Republic. Both men later collaborated with Rabuka in the creation of a new constitution.

On 22 October, Chirac's Interministerial Committee on the South Pacific met in Paris to discuss Fijian requests for aid. Flosse reportedly presented the committee with a list of requests from Rabuka which included the despatch of military vehicles, French military training for Fijian Army officers, and a GIGN mission to assist in security planning.¹⁸⁴ Although it was decided to allocate additional aid to Fiji for 1988, not all of the Fijian requests would be met. The request for a GIGN team was not acted upon, probably because to give policing advice to Rabuka would have been too controversial. The arbitrary arrests and detainment in 1987 of parliamentarians, unionists, lawyers, journalists, and academics from the USP, who were either opponents of, or who were merely suspected of opposing, Rabuka had not reflected well on the new regime. It might also have been concluded, considering the zeal of members of the Fijian Army and Police Force, that Rabuka did not need the advice of foreign experts on such matters. The other two requests however, were acted upon. In January 1988 a package worth approximately 39MFF was announced. It included 53 Renault trucks and an Ecureuil helicopter, intended partly for development work. Thirty-seven of the trucks and the helicopter became the property of the Fijian Army, which since 1975 had administered a civilian conservation corps using unemployed labour for construction work.¹⁸⁵

The end of cohabitation in Paris did not affect relations with Fiji. The Rocard Government and its Socialist successors followed up the progress made with Fiji under Chirac. Rocard, like Chirac, avoided judgemental declarations of the sort issued by Hawke and Lange. When asked during his visit to Suva on 23 August 1989 by a Fijian Indian journalist whether it might be incongruous in the year of the bicentenary of the French Revolution to be lending assistance to a regime which had suppressed a democratically elected government and the rights of non-indigenous Fijians, Rocard replied circumspectly, yet revealingly: "All I can say is that various countries of the world are, in terms of democracy and respect for human rights, evolving at different speeds."¹⁸⁶

Undemocratic conditions which would have been considered unacceptable in the Fifth Republic were left uncriticised in the case of Fiji. French Governments since Chirac have not refrained from dealing with a self-appointed government in Suva affirming Fijian indigenous identity as its right to preeminence. On the other hand, in New Caledonia, FLNKS claims on sovereignty employing similar arguments of indigenous priority were deemed secondary to the Republican argument of equal rights for all citizens irrespective of ethnic origin. Just as Paris has expected South Pacific nations not to interfere in its internal politics, it has not passed judgement on the internal affairs of Fiji. This was a happy, and fortuitous, combination for Franco-Fijian relations, as was suggested in a speech given by Rocard in Suva:

Lorsque votre pays a traversé, il y a maintenant deux ans, une période difficile de son histoire, la France n'a pas hésité à lui marquer sa solidarité. Partant du principe qu'il ne lui appartenait pas de s'immiscer dans les affaires intérieures des Fidji et qu'il revenait aux Fidjiens, et à eux seuls, de s'en occuper, la France a poursuivi sa coopération.¹⁸⁷

Rocard denied during his time in Suva that France was according military aid to the Republic.¹⁸⁸ Admittedly, while France had not given anything as dramatic as Exocet missiles, Mirage fighters or AMX30 tanks to the Fijian Republic, both before and since Rocard's visit, Paris dispensed assistance of some benefit to the Fijian military. In April 1990, France undertook to provide \$F12.5M for the construction of a vehicle repair depot for the Fijian Army.¹⁸⁹ The Ecureuil helicopter, supplied by France in 1988, was manned by army officers, and appears to have been used predominantly for emergency evacuations.¹⁹⁰ The Ecureuil was supplemented in January 1992 with the donation by France of a Dauphin helicopter, worth \$F6M.¹⁹¹ Aid to the Fijian military has been a prominent component of French assistance since 1988.

French training for Fijian military personnel was offered on a small scale that did not supplant the programmes offered by Australia and New Zealand before the coups, and which had been subsequently been discontinued. In August and September 1989 two Fijian Army lieutenants were able to receive training as helicopter pilots, thanks to French funding to enable them to attend a flight school in Singapore.¹⁹² From April that year a Fijian major spent nine months at the French staff college at Compiègne.¹⁹³ French naval visits continued after the coups, and constituted reassuring signs of foreign support for a country facing problems with its traditional defence partners. Two French patrol boats, *La Glorieuse* and *La Railleuse*, called on Suva in October 1987 and were greeted by Rabuka. *La Railleuse* exercised with a Fijian vessel during its departure from territorial waters.¹⁹⁴ From 24 to 28 January 1988, the frigate *Balny* visited Suva, and was greeted by Rabuka.¹⁹⁵ While such calls represented signs of continued French relations, they were by no means new. Naval visits were a long-standing part of the French military presence in the South Pacific.

An innovation in the field of French military cooperation in the South Pacific took place in 1990. In June, the French Navy demonstrated the

surveillance capacities of one of its Gardian jets. Suva was sufficiently impressed to ask France to undertake monitoring of the Fijian EEZ. Prior to the coups, this task had been performed by the RNZAF. In the absence of the RNZAF, the French Navy assumed this duty, and conducted periodic surveys for the Fijian Government.¹⁹⁶ From January 1991 to October 1993, French Gardians made 22 trips to Fiji, mainly from Nouméa, to conduct aerial patrols.¹⁹⁷ By 1993, France was spending around \$F230,000 per annum on aerial surveillance of the Fijian EEZ.¹⁹⁸

These events were part of Fijian efforts from October 1987 to secure substitutes for American, Australian and New Zealand military assistance.¹⁹⁹ France was not the only country which responded with this policy to benevolent help. As the coups had caused the suspension of an Australian plan to provide the Fijian Naval Squadron with patrol boats, in 1991 Fiji purchased four Israeli patrol boats on credit.²⁰⁰ French aerial patrolling in itself was insufficient to police the Fijian EEZ, which covers 1.26Mkm². Fiji that year secured a \$F2M loan from Taiwan to buy army vehicles. Suva also increased its national defence expenditure in response to the gap created by the withdrawal of Australian, New Zealand and US military assistance. The Fijian defence budget increased from \$F15M in 1986 to \$F25M by 1989.²⁰¹

Fijian efforts to maintain a defence programme in the absence of Australian, New Zealand and US cooperation were not considered adequate in Suva. The few individuals trained with French assistance could not replace the extensive training programmes set up with Australia and New Zealand prior to the coups. Although France deployed its surveillance aircraft to assist Fiji, and made port calls, the primary task of French units in the region was to patrol the EEZs of the Pacific TOM, a major mission in itself. When Australia offered to resume full military cooperation in July 1992,²⁰² followed by New Zealand in September,²⁰³ these offers were accepted by Rabuka, who had solicited the reinstatement of these links from the time of his appointment as Prime Minister in June that year. Following the reopening of Australian and New Zealand defence links with Fiji, French cooperation was retained. French naval aircraft went on conducting aerial sweeps of the Fijian EEZ.²⁰⁴ French naval vessels continued to make port calls. The *Rhin* and the *Dumont d'Urville* stopped at Suva at the end of July 1992.²⁰⁵ In March 1993, France and Fiji agreed to commence troop exchanges.²⁰⁶ A platoon of French soldiers from New Caledonia was flown to Fiji for exercises in May, at the same time as a Fijian platoon exercised in New Caledonia.²⁰⁷ Such cooperation would have appeared fantastic prior to the signing of the Matignon Accords, and the quietening of tempers over the political future of New Caledonia. Times had changed radically since Mara's declaration in May 1988 that France was indulging in "gunboat diplomacy" in the territory.²⁰⁸

An initially unforeseen consequence of this rapprochement has been to facilitate closer cooperation between the military forces of France, Australia and New Zealand. Their units were constrained to liaise over the coordination of their respective assistance to Fiji, whether it be funding, training or maritime surveillance, if only to avoid duplication of effort. There has been no official expression of opposition to such cooperation either from Canberra or Wellington. In February 1993, at the time when France accepted a request from Vanuatu to begin monitoring its EEZ, John Trotter, the Australian Ambassador to Suva, voiced Canberra's support for French surveillance efforts as a complement to those of Australia.²⁰⁹ New Zealand has been positive about the assistance France can provide to island states in EEZ surveillance. Wellington's support was first offered in the case of French sweeps of the Cook Islands' waters in 1990.²¹⁰ Neither Australia nor New Zealand are capable of offering continual surveillance of South Pacific EEZs in addition to their own extensive territorial waters. French cooperation is a useful extension to their efforts. In

May 1993, French, Australian and New Zealand officials met in Honiara to discuss the coordination of EEZ surveillance efforts in the South Pacific. It was agreed to exchange flight information.²¹¹

Australian and New Zealand military personnel have been combining stops at New Caledonia with their missions to Fiji. In September 1992 30 RNZAF officer trainees visited New Caledonia to view the operations of their French counterparts before travelling on to Suva to make a tour of Fijian military bases.²¹² The following month the patrol boat *HMAS Ipswich* called in at Suva before travelling on to the Loyalty Islands.²¹³ Such contacts occurred in a time of already improving defence ties. In May 1991, the *HMNZS Southland*, in mooring at Papeete, became the first New Zealand naval vessel to visit a French port since the Greenpeace affair.²¹⁴ In May 1993 the *Jacques Cartier* paid the first visit to New Zealand by a French naval vessel since the same affair.²¹⁵ Two months later the *HMNZS Canterbury* and the *Endeavour* arrived at Toulon.²¹⁶ These contacts form part of an important trend. It appears that the absence of cooperation between the French, Australian and New Zealand military forces is being broken down, to an extent that would have been inadmissible during the diplomatic rows of the 1980s. The demands of assistance from island states, namely the Cooks, Vanuatu, and Fiji, served as a catalyst to multilateral military cooperation. In the early 1990s French forces were less isolated in the South Pacific than they were in preceding decades.

The French maintenance of cooperation with Fiji and other island states into the 1990s has challenged the earlier assertion that Paris was motivated by fickle self-interest. In November 1987, in response to French negotiations with the Fijian Republic over aid links, Foreign Minister Hayden and Kim Beazley, the Australian Defence Minister, accused France of short-term pragmatism and warned that the country could not be regarded as a serious long-term regional partner.²¹⁷ The Australian and New Zealand Labour Governments displayed signs of pragmatism themselves. Neither was a stayer in the sense of opposition to the undemocratic foundation of the Fijian Republic. Both recognised the Republic, and restored non-military aid, in 1988.²¹⁸ This about-turn was perhaps made in response to the inroads French assistance was making. The pronouncements which Hawke and Lange made in 1987 concerning the defence of democracy and the undesirability of Rabuka were not acted on. Neither was prepared to offer more than fleeting moral support to Bavadra, despite their professions of outrage at the overthrow of his Government. Canberra and Wellington were not prepared to commit themselves militarily in the defence of Fijian democracy. Such action could have been costly, in both human and financial terms. It would also have alienated the other members of the South Pacific Forum, who largely supported Rabuka's argument that he was crusading to defend the rights of indigenous Fijians in the face of the local Indian community.

Negative analysis in Canberra of French cooperation neglected certain precedents. French relations with independent Fiji began in the 1970s and predated the events in 1987. Paris had long-term reasons for seeking closer ties with Fiji which transcended the diplomatic setting created by the coups of 1987. Ties were initially mainly confined to the two countries' membership in the South Pacific Commission, and French scientific and technical aid lent to the USP,²¹⁹ contacts which have persisted into the 1990s. Antagonism between France and Suva over the question of nuclear testing formed the main obstacle to closer diplomatic relations in the 1970s. Fiji, represented by Mara, was the motive force behind the creation of the South Pacific Forum in 1971, which acted as a major vehicle for the expression of regional hostility to French nuclear testing. Fiji's anti-nuclear stance was the probable cause of the nine-month wait France imposed in 1976 before agreeing to the nomination of a Fijian Ambassador to the EEC.²²⁰

Yet, as elsewhere in the region, differences over nuclear testing did not prevent the extension of diplomatic ties. The posting of the first resident French Ambassador to Suva in 1980 was a reflection of French interest in furthering cooperation with a major player in regional affairs. Suva came to perceive valid reasons for exploring better contacts with Paris. As Britain was a major importer of Fijian sugar, it was in the interests of Suva to improve its rapport with France, a member of the EEC whose displeasure might have had deleterious consequences for this trade. The French DOM in the Caribbean were also sugar producers for the European market, and it was not necessarily in their interests for Paris to facilitate Fijian sugar exports. The Lomé Convention added a dimension to bilateral relations between Fiji and France. From 1978, Fiji was a prominent regional recipient of aid funds from this agreement. The first Lomé Convention, which lasted from 1978 to 1980, involved only two South Pacific states: Fiji received 24.2M ECU, while Papua New Guinea was given 8.9M ECU.²²¹ For Lomé II (1981 to 1985), Fiji fell to second place out of eight countries in the South Pacific receiving this funding, although its 35.8M share of the 106.5M ECU in question was not negligible.²²² Considering the importance of European trade and aid funding to Suva, it was not unnatural for Suva to be receptive to the establishment of a French Embassy.

The basis for Franco-Fijian cooperation was laid, not in the aftermath of the coups of 1987, but a decade before. Rocard's visit to Suva in August 1989 was hailed by French and Fijian representatives as the beginning of a new era in bilateral relations. Its antecedents should not be disregarded. Just as Rocard spoke in Suva of the importance of Fiji for French relations with the South Pacific, and his hope of improving aid, trade and cultural links,²²³ on 12 September 1980 François-Poncet, as French Foreign Minister, had used similar terms during a reception held in Paris for Mara. François-Poncet praised Fiji for its handling of negotiations under the Lomé Convention, its successful collaboration with France in UN peace-keeping efforts in Lebanon since 1978, and expressed the hope for enhanced relations between France, Fiji, and its regional neighbours.²²⁴

It was however not until 1987 that French bilateral aid to Fiji climbed to a level which reflected well upon the glowingly positive sentiments offered by François-Poncet. Before the coups Fijian anti-nuclear policy and, from 1986, Suva's backing for the FLNKS, acted as disincentives to a major increase in bilateral aid. Such aid to Fiji accounted for 5% of the French foreign aid budget to the South Pacific for 1987, 5.3MFF out of 107.1MFF.²²⁵ Funding escalated from 1987. In September 1987, 30MFF had originally been reserved for aid to Fiji, 28.65% of the 104.7MFF in regional funding allocated. This figure was increased further in 1988.²²⁶ On 6 April 1988, during a visit to Paris which included an audience with Chirac, Mara obtained a development loan for 43MFF.²²⁷ The loan agreement, signed on behalf of the French Government by Balladur, then Minister of Finance, stipulated a low interest rate of 3%, and the debt was repayable in 30 years.²²⁸ The Fijian Government denied that there were any strings attached to this or other French aid. Inoke Kubuabola, the Minister for Information, wrote in April 1990:

The provision by France of financial and technical assistance to Fiji has in no way inhibited or amended the interim government's policy on French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. The interim government has consistently and categorically condemned French nuclear testing in the region and will continue to do so. [...] May I also categorically state that the government of France has never requested Fiji to relinquish its policy and position on nuclear testing as a condition to French aid.²²⁹

While the members of the Fijian anti-nuclear movement have rejected such claims, they have not presented conclusive evidence to suggest that Fiji has changed its foreign policy on testing since the coups.

Fiji has in fact by no means been a submissive recipient of French aid. Although relations between France and Fiji had, by the 1990s, improved greatly since the middle of the 1980s, Fiji retained its capacity to distance itself from France on certain issues, and not only on the questions of the future of New Caledonia and nuclear tests. From 1990 to 1992, Fiji lobbied, in the face of strenuous opposition from France, for the relocation of the headquarters of the South Pacific Commission from Nouméa to Suva. Fijian representatives argued, not disinterestedly, that the buildings in question, dating from the 1940s, had outlived their usefulness and that a modern, more centrally located complex should be constructed in Suva. The relocation of the Commission to Suva would be logical in that other major regional bodies such as the USP and Secretariat of the South Pacific Forum were already there. Having the Commission in Suva would have provided an additional source of prestige for Fiji. The construction, staffing and maintenance of the buildings would have provided employment for Fijians. The Fijian Government received support from an unexpected quarter. As President of the South Province, Jacques Lafleur wanted the Commission to vacate its valuable site on the Anse Vata beachfront so that hotels or other tourism-related developments could be built there. In addition he resented the presence of the Commission, characterising it as a hot-bed of subversive pro-Kanak researchers.²³⁰ By March 1992, after extended argument, the Fijian proposal was rejected and it was resolved that the headquarters would stay in Nouméa, although it would be relocated to another location. France united with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu in opposing the measure. Paris did not wish to see the headquarters moved, as this would not be in the interests of direct French cooperation with the region. The Melanesian Spearhead Group members contended that the presence of the Commission in Nouméa was useful in providing development assistance and expertise to Kanaks. Other Commission members were against the expense involved in relocating the headquarters to Fiji.²³¹

A more short-lived tiff between France and Fiji peaked at the end of January 1993. Carine Kobler, a diplomat working in the French Embassy in Suva, was expelled for refusing to pay \$F15,000 customs duty on a 10m yacht which she had imported from the United States. She argued that it counted as diplomatic baggage and should therefore be exempt from any levy.²³² The expulsion took place in spite of protests from French diplomats that the Fijian Government's interpretation of the Vienna Convention was too narrow. The French Embassy in Suva issued a declaration declaring the expulsion to be an "unfriendly initiative" which tarnished bilateral relations.²³³ There was little likelihood however that Paris would allow a dispute over a yacht to threaten bilateral relations built up since the 1970s. In the months that followed it was apparent that links had not been greatly disturbed by the matter. France did not halt its aid to Fiji, which continued to be dispensed in sizeable quantities,²³⁴ or take any other clear-cut action in retaliation.

In 1993, the two nations retained a healthy relationship into the second period of cohabitation in Paris. The first high-level meeting with a member of the Balladur Government took place from 17 to 20 June, when Perben visited Suva. In discussions with Rabuka, Perben assured him that his Government held Fiji in high esteem and that his stop during his first tour of the Pacific TOM was evidence of this. Rabuka declared that the Republic valued French assistance.²³⁵ Cordial ties between the two states appear set to persist in the 1990s, to the mutual benefit of French efforts toward regional integration, and to the advantage of Fijian national development.

Unlike the French Embassies at Port Vila and Port Moresby, the post at Suva served as the hub for a network of diplomatic links with several

neighbouring island states. During the 1980s, the French Ambassador received accreditation to Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru.²³⁶ Formerly, French embassy staff at Wellington had generally been in charge of relations with the independent states of Polynesia. The Suva post was more convenient because of its geographical proximity. The Suva embassy took charge of relations with Tuvalu, Nauru and Tonga in 1981, followed by Kiribati in 1982. Personnel from Suva liaised with these Polynesian micro-states for the establishment of appropriately small-scale development projects that contributed to the objective of improving the image of France.²³⁷ Since May 1990, aid to these countries has been overseen by a regional councillor for cooperation and development.²³⁸ Staff at Wellington were still formally responsible for liaison with Western Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, because of these islands' history of close relations with Wellington, and the presence of representatives from these micro-states in New Zealand. During his stewardship of French regional relations from 1986 to 1988, Flosse cut across these divisions, particularly in the case of the Cook Islands. This delimitation has also been overlooked in other cases, for example cyclone relief funding. After cyclone Ofa crossed the South-West Pacific in February 1990, the French Embassy in Suva was responsible for distributing a total of 350,000FF to Western Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Tokelau and Niue.²³⁹

Tonga expressed no reluctance to accept French aid during the 1980s. Traditionally the kingdom had had good relations with Paris since Napoleon III became the first European head of state to recognise the kingdom in 1855.²⁴⁰ This sentimental motive retained some vigour in the 1980s. The decade began cordially when, during his visit to Nuku'alofa in January 1980, Stirn renewed the treaty of friendship between France and Tonga.²⁴¹ As the Tongan monarchy concurred with the French attitude that what happened in the French Pacific TOM was an internal matter, in the 1980s there were no grounds for disputes between French and Tongan representatives, and no local moral objections to aid links. King Tupou IV and Prince Tupouto'a have viewed French relations positively.²⁴²

While relations have been friendly, they have not presaged a major implantation of French development assistance in Tonga. From 1980 to 1985, French funding constituted only 0.5% of total foreign bilateral aid to the kingdom, although French assistance rose to 12.0% from 1988 to 1989.²⁴³ The bulk of this increase consisted of \$T2.8M in funds for the construction of Lapérouse Outdoor Stadium at Teufaiva, inaugurated by Avice on 22 August 1989 on the occasion of the Third South Pacific Mini-Games.²⁴⁴ Avice, as Delegate Minister to Foreign Affairs, was the most senior French representative to have arrived in Tonga, and her visit was considered a special occasion. French aid to Tonga has otherwise been concentrated on agricultural development. French agricultural cooperation began in 1980 when the first French project worker arrived. Dr Paul Luu became the head of the French Tonga Project at the Vaini Research Farm, which has worked on the development of vanilla production from 1980 to 1986, appropriate technologies from 1982, and joint projects with New Zealand on coffee production and with Australia on black pepper production. In 1990, there were three French specialists in Tonga working on the production of vanilla and spices for export.²⁴⁵ In May 1991 six trucks and two cars worth approximately 1.58MFF were presented to the Tongan Government by Jacolin, the French Ambassador to Fiji, for use by the Tongan Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.²⁴⁶

Other French assistance has taken the form of funds for reconstruction work. In September 1990 Jean Gardère and Jean Frimat, officials from the French Embassy at Suva, presented the Tongan Government with a cheque for approximately 53,000FF to assist in cyclone recovery work.²⁴⁷ Paris has also provided funding for the operations of the Nuku'alofa branch of the Alliance française, which opened in 1987.²⁴⁸ This event marked the beginning in Tonga

of French language teaching, an important agent for the transmission of French culture. Francophone Tongans were still rare in 1993, with only one national, Lolomana'ai Fili, having obtained a degree at a French university. He studied agronomy at the University of the French Antilles, on Guadeloupe, graduating in 1992.²⁴⁹ Tonga has also played a part in greater French military cooperation in the South Pacific. In September 1993, the kingdom hosted French troops from New Caledonia and US troops from Hawaii for training exercises with the Tonga Defence Force.²⁵⁰ Such cooperative developments constitute small beginnings which should lead to further diversification of French aid to Tonga in the 1990s.

The efforts in Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati of French diplomats based in Fiji have been similarly modest. Although in January 1986 Tuvalu distanced itself from France by refusing a warship visit in order to express opposition to nuclear testing, the Tuvalu Government has subsequently shown signs of cooperation with France. Since the accreditation of the French Ambassador at Suva in 1981, the most significant diplomatic consequence for France has been the signature of a territorial delimitation agreement in September 1986.²⁵¹ In 1991, negotiations took place concerning the opening of a shipping link between Tuvalu and Wallis and Futuna.²⁵² Nothing has been heard of these talks since. The line would doubtless have been unprofitable to run. French aid in the late 1980s was a minor part of Tuvalu's total aid. In 1987, it comprised less than 5.5% of total aid received, far behind the contribution of Britain (50.1% of total aid).²⁵³ The link with France has nevertheless remained active in the 1990s. Jacolin visited Funafuti in September 1990 to offer French funding for reconstruction work in the aftermath of cyclone Ofa.²⁵⁴ In July 1992 Prime Minister Bikenibeu Paeniu travelled to Fiji to discuss further aid funding and to attend Bastille Day celebrations at the French Embassy in Suva.²⁵⁵

French aid efforts to the Polynesian island states have on the whole been small-scale and have not matched the importance of French links with Vanuatu or Fiji. French cooperation remains unevenly scattered, with surprising consequences in some cases. The oldest independent island state of the South Pacific, Western Samoa, founded in 1962, has been little affected by French bilateral development efforts. From the late 1970s, French aid was prominent in the activities of one man, Dr René Esser, an orthopedic surgeon who intermittently worked at Apia National Hospital under French funding.²⁵⁶ His presence led to greater things. From 1987, Western Samoan medical staff studied orthopedics in French Polynesia with French financial support.²⁵⁷ In March 1990, the construction of an orthopedics centre thanks to approximately 19.6MFF assistance from France was announced.²⁵⁸ This extension to the National Hospital in Apia was officially opened by Gabriel de Bellescize, the French Ambassador to New Zealand, in February 1993.²⁵⁹ This assistance was not the sole form French aid has assumed in Western Samoa. Cyclone reconstruction aid has also been provided. The relative significance of these developments should not be overestimated in a country with a population of around 160,000, for which developmental, economic and cultural ties with New Zealand remain paramount. Of the European nations, West Germany was the most important to Western Samoa. In 1989 West Germany purchased 23.2% of the country's exports, second only to New Zealand (34.5%).²⁶⁰ Although German sovereignty over Apia ended in 1914, the German presence in Western Samoa was of greater commercial significance than France's, and its bilateral aid funding has been more generous.²⁶¹

The Emerging Role of the Pacific TOM

Preceding sections have examined the role of the French Government in improving French South Pacific integration through the establishment of aid and cooperation initiatives, in accordance with regional policy goals discussed in chapters 1 and 5. This concluding section is devoted to the part that the political leaders of the Pacific TOM have played. The activities of territorial leaders in improving French relations with the South Pacific constituted a new trend in the 1980s, a consequence in part of the greater autonomy that they were accorded under the territorial statutes introduced during that decade. If the regional integration of the TOM described as desirable by French Governments since the 1970s is to become a reality, territorial leaders must, of necessity, participate in that process. The effects of their participation are discussed below in order to gauge the extent to which French regional relations have developed at territorial level.

Although the signature of the Matignon Accords has been hailed by Paris and regional governments as the beginning of a new era of regional cooperation with the Pacific TOM, as territorial leaders were allowed an active role in negotiating external trade and foreign investment,²⁶² similar steps had already taken place in the early 1980s. For example, 1982 was an important year for furthering the participation of the Pacific TOM in regional cooperation. At the Saipan conference of the South Pacific Commission, delegates agreed to allow New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia to have separate representation at commission meetings.²⁶³ Independently of the Commission, French Polynesian political leaders had been active in improving cooperation with the region since the early 1980s. Unlike the multilateral contacts developed by New Caledonian leaders with the assistance of the French State from 1988, this earlier contact was bilateral in nature, involving the Cook Islands.

Following several hundred years of separate cultural development, and over a century of differing European influences, Rarotonga and Papeete did not enjoy important economic and diplomatic links prior to the 1980s. The introduction of English culture and administrative models in the Cooks since the 1880s, paralleled by the introduction of Gallic institutions in what became known as French Polynesia, served to isolate the two territories. The disparate European heritages of the Cook Islands and French Polynesia hindered their mutual cooperation. So too did the Cooks' opposition to French nuclear testing, which was voiced from 1963, two years before the islands gained autonomy in association with New Zealand.²⁶⁴

None the less, an abiding tie between the Cook Islands and French Polynesia survived the advent of Franco-British colonial rivalry in the South Pacific: a common Polynesian heritage. Tahiti and its adjacent isles are the ancestral homelands of Cook Islanders, and after several hundred years of separate cultural development, Cook Islands Maori and Tahitian were still mutually comprehensible languages. Territorial boundaries imposed by France and Britain could not dispel this dimension. The Cooks and Tahiti are both culturally and geographically closer to one another than Tahiti is to some parts of French Polynesia, notably the Marquesas. In addition, geographically the Cooks are closer to Tahiti than to New Zealand.

The barriers of Rarotonga's and Tahiti's disparate colonial heritages did not start to be significantly broken down in the fields of trade and political links until the early 1980s. In July 1983, during talks in Papeete, the CIP Government of Geoffrey Henry negotiated access to the Tahitian market for the Cook Islands' fruit and vegetables.²⁶⁵ Six months after the installation of his DP Government in November 1983, Tom Davis was in Papeete for further discussions.²⁶⁶ It was agreed that Cook Islands and French Polynesian leaders would hold biannual meetings to discuss trade, agricultural and technical cooperation. These contacts predated the promulgation of the French Polynesian

Internal Autonomy Statute in September 1984, as well as setting the stage for further cooperation between Rarotonga and Papeete. In spite of the fact that the Cook Islands' formal link with Paris was through the French Embassy at Wellington, this channel was arguably less important for French relations than direct contacts with Papeete.

As Territorial Vice-President before the establishment of the Internal Autonomy Statute, Flosse led negotiations with Cooks representatives in 1983 and 1984. Flosse held the Cook Islands in high esteem, reflecting his desire to develop closer ties between French Polynesia and its Polynesian neighbours, and because he admired the territory as a model for the degree of autonomy that French Polynesia might attain.²⁶⁷ The appointment of Flosse as Secretary of State to the South Pacific was a fortunate choice for the Cooks. This obscure territory of around 15,000 inhabitants found for the first time that it had an active advocate at ministerial level in Paris. Flosse facilitated meetings with Chirac and his Ministers that in turn had positive effects in Paris. In July 1986, Davis met Chirac in Paris in his capacity as South Pacific Forum chairman. Among the issues discussed was New Caledonia. Chirac received a sympathetic hearing of his plans for New Caledonia. Significantly, Davis was the only representative to defend these reforms at the annual meeting of the South Pacific Forum in August that year.²⁶⁸

During cohabitation, the Cooks became the recipients of unprecedented levels of French assistance, thanks largely to Flosse. After cyclone Sally hit Rarotonga on 2 January 1987 Flosse organised a relief team comprised of 57 military and civilian personnel from Tahiti, which disembarked to help with reconstruction work on 7 January. Flosse fostered considerable good-will, and publicity, with the presentation of two excavators, three front-end loaders, 30 chainsaws, and 40t of food and medicine. One hundred pre-fabricated houses were promised too. Only 33 of these had arrived by the time of the disbandment of Flosse's secretariat.²⁶⁹

French assistance did not end with the relief operation organised by Flosse. The Chirac Government budgeted 6.9MFF in aid to the Cooks for 1987, a figure larger than the initial allocation to Fiji of 5.3MFF.²⁷⁰ From 2 to 9 September 1987 Davis's successor, Prime Minister Pupu Robati (DP), visited Paris, accompanied by Flosse, to meet Chirac and his Ministers. Robati returned with a French commitment to a 50MFF soft loan for further reconstruction work and hotel development in Avarua.²⁷¹ The amount to be loaned was confirmed in July 1988, when the Cooks Foreign Minister Norman George met Avicé in Paris to gain reassurance that the Rocard Government intended to honour the existing commitment to make the loan transfer in 1989.²⁷² The agreement was honoured, and was the first of a series of loan agreements to be signed with Socialist Governments. In February 1992, the Cooks negotiated a French loan worth approximately 5MFF to upgrade Rarotonga's water supply. Around the same time, it was estimated that French funding for the renovation of the Rarotonga electrical grid had exceeded 14MFF.²⁷³

Development loans have been just one feature of diversified cooperation between France and the Cook Islands since the late 1980s, in which French Polynesia has played a function. On 12 April 1989 France appointed a permanent representative in Avarua in the form of an Honorary Consul, Dianne McKegg.²⁷⁴ In May 1990 the Cook Islands agreed to allow a French Polynesian fishing vessel to operate in the Cooks' EEZ in exchange for part of the catch. French Polynesia in addition offered technical assistance to the Cooks on pearl farming.²⁷⁵ Three months later de Bellescize and Geoffrey Henry, then Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, signed a territorial delimitation agreement concerning the boundary between the Cooks and French Polynesia.²⁷⁶ In October 1990 the *Dumont d'Urville* called at Rarotonga to transport approximately 360,000FF worth of French-donated solar power equipment to Pukapuka and Palmerston Islands.²⁷⁷

In 1989, Alexandre Léontieff, as the French Polynesian Territorial President, invited Henry to Papeete to meet Rocard during his tour of the South Pacific. In Papeete on 24 August Henry and Rocard discussed the possibility of French assistance in monitoring the Cook Islands' EEZ, and a meeting was arranged to take place in Paris on 17 October to discuss the matter further.²⁷⁸ From 5 to 7 September 1990, a Gardian jet conducted the first French aerial sweep for the Cook Islands. In February 1991, the French Navy sent a Gardian and a patrol boat to conduct a joint patrol with the Cook Islands' lone patrol boat and an RNZAF Orion.²⁷⁹ Henry pointed out that his government needed all the help it could get in the way of maritime surveillance: "We have approximately two million square kilometres of water and only one patrol boat to look after it with an inadequate supply of diesel".²⁸⁰ Wellington's reaction to this initiative was positive. Don McKinnon, the New Zealand Foreign Minister, responded in February 1991 by saying that the National Government had no objection to the French helping with the maritime surveillance of the Cooks, or to the friendship treaty under discussion.²⁸¹ The latter was signed by Henry and Cresson in Paris during October 1991, and entailed an undertaking to continue French cultural, technical and financial aid.²⁸²

The Cooks' contacts with Papeete and Paris were a response to the need to find sources of aid to supplement New Zealand budgetary support, which is scheduled to be phased out by 2007.²⁸³ Closer ties with the neighbouring islands of French Polynesia and the acceptance of French finance were part of attempts to diversify sources of foreign development assistance. While French cooperation with the Cook Islands has necessarily been on a smaller scale than funding for Fiji, a reflection of the different sizes of the two island states more than of any hierarchy, it stands as one of the successes of French regional diplomacy from the 1980s. Aid to the Cooks helped the cultivation of a comparatively sympathetic member of the South Pacific Forum, which has refrained from taking a pro-Kanak stand on New Caledonia, and has not been particularly forceful in the expression of anti-nuclear policy since the 1980s.

The Matignon Accords allowed New Caledonia to participate in French regional cooperation through article 88, which authorised territorial and provincial leaders to represent New Caledonia in negotiations with South Pacific states. The potential of this particular article was not neglected in the first five years of the implementation of the agreement. From 1988 to 1993, New Caledonian leaders, in close association with representatives of the French State, mainly the High Commissioner and ambassadorial staff in neighbouring countries, have been active in exploring contacts in the fields of trade, culture, education and agriculture.

New Caledonian representatives, aided by the High Commissioner and French diplomats in the region, have negotiated various training programmes between the territory and its neighbours. In November 1989 a New Caledonian delegation comprised of members from all three provinces held talks in Australia with the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, which had set aside an allocation of \$A400,000 for a training programme for New Caledonians. This programme commenced in 1990.²⁸⁴ That year the Australian Foreign Ministry funded the diplomatic training of a Loyalty Islander in Canberra at the request of Richard Kaloi, the President of the Loyalties Province, who wanted a provincial representative with knowledge of the Australian administration.²⁸⁵ In April 1992, an agreement was signed to set up a student exchange programme between the Port Vila branch of the University of the South Pacific and the Nouméa campus of the French University of the South Pacific.²⁸⁶ Although territorial leaders did not play a representative role in the signing of the agreement, international educational cooperation has been initiated by the Loyalty Islands Province. Following a visit to Port Vila by Kaloi in May 1992, a teacher exchange programme was opened between the Loyalties and Vanuatu. From August to December 1992 three English teachers from Vanuatu

worked in the Loyalties teaching primary school pupils. This transfer was the beginning of a scheme which for 1993 was expanded to allow five Vanuatu English teachers to work in the Loyalties, and three Loyalty Islanders to travel to Vanuatu to teach French.²⁸⁷ In April 1993 Kaloi met with John Kaputin, the PNG Foreign Minister, during his tour of New Caledonia, and held preliminary talks concerning a training scheme for Loyalty Islanders, to be run by the PNG Foreign Affairs Department.²⁸⁸ The Republic of Fiji has also offered some assistance, dedicated specifically to young Kanaks, as a sign of Melanesian solidarity. In January 1991 Fiji funded the training of two Kanak medical students in Suva.²⁸⁹ Fijian support for the South Pacific Forum's Kanak Training Fund, offered in July 1992, consisted of a donation of \$F50,000. The PNG Government donated \$F140,000 to the fund, which was administered by the Forum Secretariat in Suva.²⁹⁰

Agricultural exchanges have been of particular interest, both to New Caledonia and to its island neighbours. In the case of New Caledonian missions to New Zealand and Australia, technical advice has flowed toward the territory, a reflection of greater Australian and New Zealand technical expertise. New Caledonians have sought information on new fields such as deer farming, and on export standards for packing and processing.²⁹¹ On the other hand, land reform is an issue of mutual interest in Vanuatu, Fiji and New Caledonia. Work carried out by ADRAF on land redistribution and rural development has been studied by Vanuatu officials for ideas that could be applied by Port Vila. In October 1990 Vanuatu's Minister of Agriculture, Jacques Hopa, and William Mahit, the Land Minister, visited New Caledonia to study the land reform schemes of ADRAF.²⁹² Fijian land reform and management have similarly interested New Caledonian officials. In August 1990, an ADRAF delegation travelled to Fiji to study Fijian land reform and management.²⁹³ A year later, Kaloi travelled to Suva as well, to see what Loyalty Islanders could learn from Fijian systems.²⁹⁴ The Loyalty Islands showed even greater interest when, in November 1993, it sent a 21-member delegation to investigate Fijian land tenure.²⁹⁵

Regional trade with New Caledonia has been facilitated under the Matignon Accords through the relaxation of territorial import restrictions, and through the multiplication of trade missions since 1988. (See Appendix 11) In 1990, Australia lent its support to French Pacific trade by offering the facilities of its Market Advisory Services to the French Pacific TOM, allowing access to Australian market research data, facilitation of trade delegations and the use of Australian Trade Development Centres.²⁹⁶ The French Embassy in Suva has played its part in improving business links between the Pacific TOM and the region through the Trade Commission it opened in March 1990.²⁹⁷ Its liaison has benefited French Polynesia as well as New Caledonia. In September 1990 a Fijian trade mission was sent to Papeete.²⁹⁸ The following year, a Fijian trade delegation went to New Caledonia in April, which prompted the visit of a New Caledonian group to Fiji in August.²⁹⁹ Although Fijian trade with the French Pacific in the early 1990s was still low, the Fijian Trade Minister in 1990, Berenado Vunibobo, held out hopes for its increase in years to come.³⁰⁰

New Caledonian trade with Vanuatu has traditionally been more important than that with Fiji. Under the Matignon Accords, trade appears set to increase between the two parties, and has been promoted in Nouméa and Port Vila. In January 1992 a ministerial delegation from Port Vila arrived in Nouméa to discuss increasing activity between Vanuatu and New Caledonia.³⁰¹ A month later a New Caledonian trade delegation made a trip to Port Vila for the same purpose.³⁰² The announcement of the establishment of a Vanuatu Consulate in Nouméa in August, was made with the intention of promoting trade.³⁰³ This orientation was confirmed by the appointment in April 1993 of Serge Bourdet, formerly the Secretary-General of the Port Vila Chamber of Commerce, as the

new Consul in Nouméa.³⁰⁴ The appointment took place in the same month as the official opening of the Consulate, which was presided over by Carlot. During his stay in Nouméa, Carlot and High Commissioner Christnacht agreed to arrange meetings between New Caledonian and Vanuatu representatives every three months to review ongoing bilateral aid and cooperation. Metropolitan French products shipped to Vanuatu accounted for 5.4% of its imports in 1989. New Caledonian products represented 3.0% of imports that year.³⁰⁵ Nouméa is a significant entrepot for Vanuatu's exports to metropolitan France (9.6% of total Vanuatu exports in 1989). Vanuatu's exports to New Caledonia, mainly beef, represented an additional 7.7% of its annual total.³⁰⁶

On 19 November 1993, cooperation between New Caledonia and Vanuatu was officially recognised by a friendship and cooperation accord. Christnacht, Simon Loueckhote, the President of the Territorial Congress, provincial representatives, and Lafleur, acting as the representative of the Balladur Government, arrived in Port Vila to sign an agreement covering ongoing aid and cooperation in the areas of education, commerce, sport and health. Christnacht hailed the document as a good example of the spirit of the Matignon Accords being put into practice.³⁰⁷ The friendship and cooperation agreement was consistent with the orientations of article 88 of the Accords, which called for greater territorial integration in the region via the participation of territorial representatives in international agreements.³⁰⁸ It was estimated that by the time of the signature of the agreement, the value of bilateral aid and cooperation funding between New Caledonia and Vanuatu had exceeded 2MFF.³⁰⁹ This was a proportionately large amount.

On a larger scale, the links opened between French Polynesia, New Caledonia and their regional neighbours since the 1980s have generally been of a minor nature, and are unlikely to displace the dependence of these three TOM on metropolitan France. But these links, along with those established by French diplomats based in the South Pacific, offered signs to suggest that by the early 1990s French hopes of regional integration had gone beyond being little more than talk, as they were in the 1970s. The exception to this trend lies in Wallis and Futuna. Whereas the administrative leeway offered by the Internal Autonomy Statute (in the case of French Polynesia) and the Matignon Accords (in the case of New Caledonia) had helped reduce territorial isolation from the region, no such statute reforms were introduced in Wallis and Futuna in the 1980s. Mata Utu has not participated in the increased regional cooperation reflected in greater numbers of official delegations shuttling to and from Nouméa and Papeete in the pursuit of expanded cooperation.

While French bilateral aid became more widely distributed in the 1980s, to Vanuatu's relative disadvantage, it did not become so significant by the early 1990s that it had displaced the contributions of established donors such as Australia, New Zealand or Britain. However French assistance became a useful supplement to other sources for island nations, and played an important part in improving bilateral relations in the cases of Fiji, the Cook Islands, Tonga, and eventually Vanuatu. Other than in the Melanesian Spearhead Group nations the deployment of French aid was not greatly hindered by local anti-colonial or anti-nuclear policy. Claims of French cheque-book diplomacy buying the acquiescence of Pacific countries on foreign policy issues are difficult to substantiate, except perhaps in the cases of Tonga and the Cook Islands. Like Australia and New Zealand with regard to French trade, most South Pacific island states were reluctant to refuse French assistance on the grounds of opposition to French testing or New Caledonian policy. Economic constraints outweighed ideological considerations in this respect.

Notes

- ¹ *Davui* September 1989 p.1.
- ² *Pacific Report* 20 July 1989.
- ³ For a chronological summary of these efforts, see Appendix 11.
- ⁴ *The Press* 9 April 1988.
- ⁵ AFP communiqués 191326 JUL 89 19 juillet 1989, 180827 AOU 89 18 août 1989.
- ⁶ *Pacnews* 10 April 1990.
- ⁷ *Le Quotidien de Paris* 5 mai 1986.
- ⁸ *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1991 p.24.
- ⁹ *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 17 juin 1989.
- ¹⁰ See *Fiji Ministry of Information News Release* 25 November 1988, 28 May 1989. In October 1988, the Fijian representative at the UN General Assembly declared that French nuclear tests should be relocated to metropolitan France: *Fiji Times* 17 October 1988.
- ¹¹ Keith Suter: "French Nuclear Testing in the South Pacific" in *Contemporary Review* vol.126 no.1520 September 1992 p.129.
- ¹² A particular challenge in preparing this chapter resided in the use by press reports of local currencies when mentioning amounts of French aid dispensed, when these amounts were mentioned at all. Wherever possible, this account endeavours to use figures in French francs. However the difficulty of obtaining exchange rates for the franc and a variety of obscure currencies used in the South Pacific has rendered this task problematic. The confusion which can be created by leaving some figures in local currencies is counterbalanced by the inaccuracies that can creep in when converting figures back into francs. It was impossible for the author to verify what rates were used to convert the original sums from francs to local currencies, which has resulted in discrepancies when figures were reconverted by slightly different, contemporaneous exchange rates. All figures mentioned below must be considered approximate.
- ¹³ Ministère des relations extérieures, la coopération et développement: *L'aide au développement 1984/1985. Rapport d'activité* p.61.
- ¹⁴ Institut du Pacifique: *Le Pacifique nouveau centre du monde* pp.249-253.
- ¹⁵ Georges Ordonnaud: "La France et le Pacifique Sud. Enjeux stratégiques, diplomatiques et économiques" in *Politique étrangère* vol.52 no.1 printemps 1987 p.41.
- ¹⁶ Ministère des relations extérieures, Ministère de la coopération et développement: *L'aide au développement 1984/1985. Rapport d'activité* p.62.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.* p.68.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* pp.107-108. These figures do not include French citizens employed by non-governmental organisations in the region.
- ²⁰ Around \$A20M of \$A47.67M. Cited in Paul de Deckker: "Le Pacifique comme espace régional autonome. Australie, Nouvelle-Zélande et états insulaires" in *Bulletin de la société des études océanistes* no.236 tome 20 no.1 septembre 1986 p.30.
- ²¹ \$A286,000 of \$A257,054,000. *Ibid.*
- ²² \$A96,000 of \$A20,121,000. *Ibid.*
- ²³ \$A92,000 of \$A22,651,000. *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ \$A572,000 of \$A22,651,000. *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Politique étrangère* vol.52 no.1 printemps 1987 p.86.
- ²⁷ Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.
- ²⁸ Queval: "Asie/Pacifique" p.187.
- ²⁹ These countries were Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.162.
- ³⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics: *Year Book Australia 1988* p.50, *Year Book Australia 1989* p.50. Figures are converted from \$A using Australian Reserve Bank exchange rates.
- ³¹ New Zealand Department of Statistics: *New Zealand Official Year Book 1988-1989* p.113 *New Zealand Official Year Book 1990* p.106. Figures are converted from \$NZ using Australian Reserve Bank exchange rates.
- ³² *Politique étrangère* vol.52 no.1 printemps 1987 p.86.
- ³³ Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.

- 34 Stephen Henningham: "French Spending in the South Pacific" in *Pacific Economic Bulletin* vol.4 no.2 1989 pp.35-36.
- 35 *La lettre du Secrétaire d'Etat chargé de Pacifique Sud* novembre 1987 p.2.
- 36 *Fiji Times* 4 November 1993.
- 37 Commissariat Général du Plan. Groupe «Outre-Mer»: *Outre-Mer: le défi des singularités. Préparation du onzième plan* p.178.
- 38 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 22 octobre 1987 p.4573.
- 39 Gaston Flosse: "Le Pacifique" in *Revue des deux mondes* juin 1987 p.630.
- 40 *JO. Comptes rendus. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 22 octobre 1987 p.4573.
- 41 Stephen Henningham: "French Spending in the South Pacific" p.35.
- 42 *Ibid.* p.36.
- 43 The first meeting took place in Port Vila on 3 June 1985. Yann Céléné Uregei attended this meeting as the FLNKS foreign minister. *Vanuatu Weekly* 8 June 1985.
- 44 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.169.
- 45 *Pacific News Bulletin* July 1991.
- 46 In 1992, the Forum denied the FLNKS observer status, arguing that such recognition had in the past only been accorded to political representatives of territories on the verge of independence. *Ibid.* August 1992 p.5.
- 47 *The Times* 3 February 1981.
- 48 *Le Monde* 3 février 1981; *Tam Tam* 7 February 1981.
- 49 *Tam Tam* 7 February 1981.
- 50 *Le Monde* 5 février 1981.
- 51 *Ibid.* 7 février 1981.
- 52 *Ibid.* 11 février 1981.
- 53 *Far Eastern Economic Review* 20 March 1981.
- 54 "Communiqué commun franco-vanuatuan" in *La politique étrangère de la France* no.40 mars/avril 1981 p.12.
- 55 *Far Eastern Economic Review* 20 March 1981.
- 56 Cited in De Deckker: "Le Pacifique comme espace régional autonome" p.30.
- 57 *Ibid.* p.29.
- 58 Cited in *La politique étrangère de la France* no.40 mars/avril 1981 pp.18-19.
- 59 *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 18 mai 1981 p.2075.
- 60 *Far Eastern Economic Review* 11 September 1981 p.34.
- 61 *JO. Questions écrites de l'Assemblée Nationale* 30 novembre 1981 p.3449.
- 62 *Far Eastern Economic Review* 11 September 1981 p.36.
- 63 *Le Monde* 2 octobre 1981.
- 64 "France-Vanuatu" 2 octobre 1981 in *BIPA* white file 811253500.
- 65 *Ibid.* 16-20 novembre 1981 811300300; *Le Monde* 18 novembre 1981.
- 66 "France-Vanuatu" 9 décembre 1981 in *BIPA* white file 811329500.
- 67 *Le Monde* 15 mai 1982.
- 68 *Tam Tam* 12 June 1982.
- 69 *Islands Business* January 1982 p.35.
- 70 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.30 April 1984 p.32788.
- 71 Robert Robertson: *The People Stand Up: Vanuatu's foreign policies in the 1980s* p.2.
- 72 *Vanuatu Weekly* 30 May 1987.
- 73 *Pacific Magazine* November/December 1984 p.62.
- 74 *Islands Business* September 1984 p.16.
- 75 Robie: *Blood on their Banner* p.195; *The Press* 9 May 1987.
- 76 Premdas & Howard: "Vanuatu's Foreign Policy: contradictions and constraints" p.183.
- 77 *Vanuatu Weekly* 9 May 1987.
- 78 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* May 1988 p.35907.
- 79 "Loi no.82-891 du 19 octobre 1982 autorisant l'approbation d'un accord et de quatre conventions relatifs à la coopération culturelle, scientifique, et technique entre le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de la République du Vanuatu" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 20 octobre 1982 p.3164.
- 80 "France-Vanuatu" 12-19 juillet 1982 in *BIPA* white file 821230700.
- 81 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.30 April 1984 p.32787.

- 82 B. Macdonald-Milne & P. Thomas (eds.): *Yumi Stanap. Leaders and Leadership in a New Nation* p.6.
- 83 30 jours décembre 1982 p.36.
- 84 *Vanuatu Weekly* 17 November 1984.
- 85 Ibid. 25 August 1984.
- 86 Ibid. 24 November 1984.
- 87 See ibid. 24 November 1984, 1 January 1985, 16 February 1985, 27 April 1985.
- 88 R. Premdas & M. Howard: "Vanuatu's Foreign Policy: contradictions and constraints" in *Australian Outlook* no.39 1985 p.184.
- 89 *Vanuatu Weekly* 17 August 1985.
- 90 Ibid. 2 November 1985.
- 91 Ibid. 14 December 1985.
- 92 Ibid. 4 January 1986.
- 93 Ibid. 13 September 1986, 20 September 1986.
- 94 *Le Monde* 8 octobre 1986.
- 95 *Vanuatu Weekly* 12 September 1987.
- 96 Ibid. 19 September 1987.
- 97 *L'Humanité* 2 octobre 1987; *Le Monde* 2 octobre 1987; *Le Figaro* 2 octobre 1987.
- 98 *Le Matin* 2 octobre 1987.
- 99 *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1986 p.8.
- 100 *La politique étrangère* vol.52 no.1 p.86; *La Croix* 3 octobre 1987.
- 101 *Le Monde* 3 octobre 1987.
- 102 For 1987, French credits to Vanuatu were 64.7MFF out of 107.1MFF. In 1988 they amounted to 28.3MFF out of 104.7MFF. Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.
- 103 Vanuatu's diplomatic capacities were very modest. In 1992, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade had just over a dozen employees, and was considered to be understaffed. Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.213.
- 104 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol. 34 May 1988 p.35906.
- 105 *Pacific Report* 20 July 1989.
- 106 Figure provided in a letter to the author by Olivier Lacroix, Press and Information Officer at the French Embassy in Port Vila, 14 December 1993.
- 107 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.377.
- 108 *Vanuatu Weekly* 30 April 1988.
- 109 Huffer: "Les îles dans le monde ou le monde vu des îles: une approche comparée de la politique extérieure des trois micro-Etats océaniques: Fidji, Tonga et Vanuatu" pp.14-15.
- 110 *Vanuatu Weekly* 12 November 1988.
- 111 Figures provided in a letter to the author by Olivier Lacroix, Press and Information Officer at the French Embassy in Port Vila, 14 December 1993.
- 112 "The Government of the Republic of Vanuatu has launched a 15-year development programme, aimed at achieving the goal of economic self-reliance, the stage when Vanuatu will be able to meet import requirements from foreign exchange earnings and fiscal requirements from domestic revenues. This long term goal is to be achieved in three phases; 1982-1986, which is covered by the first Development Plan, is the Transition and Reconstruction phase. The second phase, 1987-1991, is to be a period of consolidating the economic development initiatives introduced during the first phase, while the third phase, 1992-1996, is to conclude the Government's programme of achieving economic self-reliance." Chamber of Commerce of Vanuatu: *Vanuatu Trade Directory 1984/85* p.77.
- 113 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.209.
- 114 *Pacific Islands Monthly* May 1993 p.41.
- 115 Doumenge: "La dynamique géopolitique du Pacifique Sud (1965-1990)" p.134.
- 116 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.212.
- 117 Premdas & Howard: "Vanuatu's Foreign Policy: contradictions and constraints" p.179.
- 118 Doumenge: "La dynamique géopolitique du Pacifique Sud (1965-1990)" p.121.
- 119 *Vanuatu Weekly* 2 April 1988.
- 120 Ibid. 24 novembre 1989; *Le Monde* 15 novembre 1989.
- 121 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 17 mars 1990.
- 122 *Fiji Times* 1 August 1990.

- 123 *Le Monde* 8-9 septembre 1991.
- 124 *Ibid.* 18 décembre 1991.
- 125 *Islands Business* January 1992 p.38; *Wellington Pacific Report* March 1992.
- 126 *Pacific Islands Monthly* December 1992 p.32.
- 127 *Ibid.* January 1994 p.33.
- 128 *New Zealand Herald* 6 December 1991.
- 129 *The Australian* 8 July 1992; *Fiji Times* 31 July 1992.
- 130 *Fiji Times* 31 July 1992.
- 131 *Vanuatu Weekly* 11 April 1992.
- 132 Interview broadcast by *Radio New Zealand* 23 January 1993.
- 133 *Vanuatu Weekly* 1 January 1992.
- 134 *Islands Business* January 1992 p.40.
- 135 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 22 avril 1993.
- 136 *Vanuatu Weekly* 1 May 1993.
- 137 *Islands Business* January 1992 p.40.
- 138 *Le Monde* 2 January 1992.
- 139 *Vanuatu Weekly* 8 February 1992; *Fiji Times* 28 October 1993.
- 140 *The Dominion* 21 May 1992; *Pacnews* 21 May 1992.
- 141 By late 1993, France had committed 8.5MFF to the television network, and had in addition payrolled two French technicians for it. Letter to the author by Olivier Lacroix, Press and Information Officer at the French Embassy in Port Vila, 14 December 1993.
- 142 *Vanuatu Weekly* 30 May 1992.
- 143 *Pacnews* 31 August 1990.
- 144 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 3 septembre 1992. In addition to there being no pressing need for haste over the matter for the French, one of the main barriers to reconciliation had been the lease of the French Embassy in Port Vila. After the expulsions in 1987, Lini had discontinued an agreement, concluded with France in 1981, for the nominal rent of the embassy grounds, an adjacent school and villas for embassy staff, for a period of fifty years. A condition of the agreement had been that all the staff accommodation must be occupied. After the reduction of personnel numbers this was no longer the case. Remaining staff were told to find accommodation elsewhere, while higher rents were imposed on the embassy and school buildings. *Vanuatu Weekly* 30 November 1991. In March 1992, the Carlot Government and French representatives in Port Vila settled this tenancy dispute by signing a rent agreement for a period of 75 years. Under the new terms France would pay higher rents for the embassy building, but low rent on the school. *The Press* 24 March 1992; *Vanuatu Weekly* 28 March 1992.
- 145 Figures provided in a letter to the author by Olivier Lacroix, Press and Information Officer at the French Embassy in Port Vila, 14 December 1993.
- 146 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 11 septembre 1992.
- 147 *Radio New Zealand* 10 December 1992.
- 148 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.204.
- 149 *Solomon Islands Government Monthly Magazine* 31 January 1982 p.3.
- 150 *Solomon Star* 17 October 1986.
- 151 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.345.
- 152 *Solomon Nius* 30 October 1986.
- 153 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* vol.34 March 1988 p.35780.
- 154 *Solomon Star* 23 January 1987; *Solomon Nius* 22 January 1987.
- 155 *Solomon Nius* 11 December 1986.
- 156 *Ibid.* 1 May 1986; *Solomon Islands News Drum* 13 March 1981.
- 157 Henningham: "France and the South Pacific in the 1980s: an Australian perspective" p.26.
- 158 *Solomon Star* 11 June 1987.
- 159 Henningham: "France and the South Pacific in the 1980s: an Australian perspective" p.26.
- 160 *PNG Post-Courier* 16 January 1980; *Far Eastern Economic Review* 1 February 1980.
- 161 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 17-23 janvier 1980.
- 162 See *PNG Post-Courier* 12 July 1984, 24 July 1985, 20 September 1985, 19 October 1989; *Libération* 13 septembre 1987; *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 2 mai 1988, 7 mai 1988; *Pacnews* 27 September 1991.
- 163 *PNG Post-Courier* 28 August 1980; *Le Monde* 22 août 1980.

- 164 *PNG Post Courier* 14 April 1983; *Le Monde* 25 July 1991.
- 165 Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.
- 166 *Otago Daily Times* 9 November 1991; *Pacnews* 11 November 1991.
- 167 Statistics provided by Nathalie Le Brun, Commercial Delegate, French Embassy in Port Moresby, in a letter to the author dated 29 November 1993.
- 168 Ibid.
- 169 *South Seas Digest* 30 July 1993.
- 170 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* pp.174-175.
- 171 Henningham: "France and the South Pacific in the 1980s: an Australian perspective" p.25.
- 172 *Le Monde* 16 mars 1991.
- 173 *Pacnews* 9 March 1992.
- 174 *Pacific Report* 14 June 1993.
- 175 "La situation [aux Fidji] est toujours préoccupante. [...] La France, pays démocratique, pays des libertés, ne peut pas approuver les coups d'Etat. Quant aux conséquences que pourra tirer le gouvernement français, il est encore trop tôt pour en parler. Elles ne dépendent pas de moi. Elles ne sont pas arrêtées." *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 16 mai 1987.
- 176 *Le Monde* 14 avril 1987.
- 177 *Fiji Times* 3 July 1993.
- 178 R. Robertson & A. Tamanisau: *Fiji. Shattered Coups* p.88.
- 179 *Libération* 10-11 octobre 1987; *The Press* 31 August 1987.
- 180 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 août 1987, 29 août 1987.
- 181 Ibid. Flosse denied any plans for this. Ibid. 31 août 1987.
- 182 *Pacific Defence Reporter* February 1988 p.25.
- 183 *Fiji Ministry of Information News Release* no.82 17 October 1987.
- 184 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 21 octobre 1987.
- 185 *Fiji Times* 7 April 1988, 15 April 1988, 26 October 1988, 17 November 1988.
- 186 *Islands Business* September 1989 p.27.
- 187 "Suva, 23 août 1989. Une coopération poursuivie à un rythme plus soutenu" in Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* p.43.
- 188 *Pacific Report* 15 September 1989; *Le Monde* 24 August 1989; *Fiji Times* 24 August 1989.
- 189 *Fiji Times* 7 April 1990.
- 190 Ibid. 7 April 1988, 15 July 1988, 26 August 1988, 17 November 1988.
- 191 *Pacnews* 28 January 1991.
- 192 *Pacific Report* 15 September 1988.
- 193 Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality Fraternity? French Military Forces in the South Pacific" p.22.
- 194 *Fiji Ministry of Information News Release* no.22 2 October 1987, no.53 7 October 1987.
- 195 *Pacific Islands Monthly* March 1988 p.9; Maclellan: "Liberty, Equality Fraternity? French Military Forces in the South Pacific" p.22.
- 196 *Fiji Times* 29 June 1990, 29 September 1990, 9 July 1991.
- 197 Ibid. 28 October 1993.
- 198 Ibid. 3 November 1993.
- 199 *The Press* 27 October 1987.
- 200 *Pacific Report* 22 August 1991.
- 201 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.100.
- 202 *Fiji Times* 10 July 1992. Australian training of Fijian military personnel was not totally cut between 1987 and 1992. They continued to travel to Australia for non-military training. For example, in 1990 a group of Fijian Army officers were studying law at Bond University in Queensland. *Pacnews* 3 July 1990.
- 203 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes hebdo* 10-16 septembre 1992.
- 204 *Fiji Times* 27 October 1993.
- 205 Ibid. 29 July 1992.
- 206 Ibid. 24 March 1993; *The Press* 24 March 1993.
- 207 *The Press* 25 May 1993; *Fiji Times* 25 May 1993.
- 208 *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* 3 mai 1988.
- 209 *Fiji Times* 5 February 1993.

- 210 *Pacnews* 17 July 1990. For further details, see below in the main text. Using the French military to patrol the EEZs of island states was not a new idea. The French Ambassador to Wellington had suggested it in 1979, pointing out that France could fulfill the regional military roles Britain had before its decolonisation in the South Pacific. At that time, such assistance was politically unacceptable to the South Pacific Forum members. *The Press* 21 May 1979.
- 211 *Pacific Report* 31 May 1993.
- 212 *Fiji Times* 28 September 1992.
- 213 *Ibid.* 17 October 1992.
- 214 *Pacnews* 27 May 1991; *The Star* 29 May 1991.
- 215 *New Zealand Herald* 11 May 1993.
- 216 *Le Monde* 22 juillet 1993.
- 217 Hayden stated: "France is not a stayer over the long term. Australia is. So is New Zealand." *Radio New Zealand* 24 November 1987; *Pacific Defence Reporter* February 1988 p.23.
- 218 *Le Monde* 24-5 janvier 1988; *Pacific Islands Monthly* May 1988 p.16.
- 219 *Le Monde* 12 septembre 1980; *Fiji Times* 1 April 1992.
- 220 *Le Monde* 12 septembre 1980.
- 221 *La politique étrangère* vol. 52 no.1 1987 p.86.
- 222 Papua New Guinea received 61.7M ECU over this period. *Ibid.*
- 223 "Suva, 23 août 1989. Une coopération poursuivie à un rythme plus soutenu" in Rocard: *Développement, Solidarité, Coopération Régionale* p.43.
- 224 "Toast du ministre des Affaires étrangères Jean François-Poncet le 12 septembre 1980." Ministère des affaires étrangères press release.
- 225 Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.
- 226 *Ibid.*
- 227 *Le Monde* 7 avril 1988; *The Press* 8 April 1988.
- 228 *Fiji Ministry of Information News Release* no.257 7 April 1988.
- 229 *Fiji Times* 12 April 1990.
- 230 *Islands Business* December 1990 pp.24-25.
- 231 *Pacific Report* 26 March 1992; *Matangi Tonga* March/April 1992 p.31.
- 232 *Fiji Times* 28 January 1993, 29 January 1993.
- 233 *Ibid.* 30 January 1993; *The Press* 30 January 1993.
- 234 In March 1993, the French Embassy in Suva donated \$F720,000 worth of medical equipment to the Fijian Ministry of Health. In June, \$F7,100 worth of computer equipment was donated to the Ports Authority. Four months later, \$F200,000 worth of equipment was given to the Marine Institute. *Fiji Times* 13 March 1993, 16 June 1993, 6 October 1993.
- 235 *Ibid.* 21 June 1993.
- 236 *Pacnews* 11 September 1990.
- 237 Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* p.204.
- 238 *Ibid.* p.376.
- 239 *Fiji Times* 23 February 1990.
- 240 A treaty between King Tupou I and the Second Empire was negotiated that year. Similar treaties were not concluded with Germany until 1876, and in Britain's case, 1887. Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.189.
- 241 *Le Monde sélection hebdomadaire* 17-23 janvier 1980.
- 242 See their comments in Sola: "Le royaume de Tonga, un Etat neutre du Pacifique" pp.15-16; *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 17 juillet 1987; *Pacific Report* 26 March 1992.
- 243 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.196.
- 244 AFP communiqué 08 22 0366 22 août 1989.
- 245 *Tonga Chronicle* 30 May 1991.
- 246 *Ibid.* 30 May 1991; *Matangi Tonga* May/June 1991 p.18.
- 247 *Pacnews* 11 September 1990.
- 248 Henningham: "France and the South Pacific in the 1980s: an Australian perspective" p.34. In addition to those in Tonga and Vanuatu, Alliance française branches were established in Fiji in 1988, and in Papua New Guinea. A branch opened in the Cook Islands in 1993.
- 249 *Tonga Chronicle* 1 October 1992.
- 250 *South Seas Digest* 10 September 1993.

- 251 *JO. Lois et décrets* 26 septembre 1986 p.11509.
- 252 *Wellington Pacific Report* September/October 1991 p.11.
- 253 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.117.
- 254 *Pacnews* 11 September 1990.
- 255 *Fiji Times* 17 July 1992. Concerning French cooperative efforts with Nauru and Kiribati, the author has no information. It is doubtful that they are any further developed than links with Tuvalu.
- 256 Anon.: "La France et le Pacifique Sud" p.39; *The Samoa Observer* 6 August 1986.
- 257 *The Samoa Observer* 24 September 1986.
- 258 *Pacnews* 22 March 1990.
- 259 *South Seas Digest* 12 February 1993.
- 260 Hoadley: *South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.220.
- 261 *Ibid.* pp.216, 220.
- 262 Haut-Commissariat de la République: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Accords de Matignon. Bilan 1991. Le chemin parcouru* p.51.
- 263 Moign: *La France et la Commission du Pacifique Sud de 1947 à nos jours* pp.44-45.
- 264 David Stone: "The Awesome Glow in the Sky: the Cook Islands and the French nuclear tests" in *Journal of Pacific History* vol. 2 1967 p.158.
- 265 *Cook Islands News* 22 July 1983.
- 266 *Ibid.* 26 May 1984; *Pacific Islands Monthly* July 1984 p.7.
- 267 30 jours septembre 1983 pp.23-24.
- 268 *Cook Islands News* 12 July 1986; *Islands Business* September 1986 pp.12-20.
- 269 *Cook Islands News* 8 January 1987, 12 January 1987, 27 January 1987, 24 September 1987, 7 April 1988; *La lettre du Secrétaire d'Etat chargé du Pacifique Sud* mars 1987.
- 270 Bates: *The South Pacific Island Countries and France* p.140.
- 271 Robati met Chirac, Pons, Jacques Valade, Delegate Minister to Research and Higher Education, and Didier Bariani, Secretary of State to Foreign Affairs. *Le Monde* 10 septembre 1987; *La lettre du Secrétaire d'Etat chargé du Pacifique Sud* novembre 1987.
- 272 *Cook Islands News* 25 July 1988.
- 273 *Ibid.* 11 February 1992; R. Crocombe & M. Crocombe: "Cook Islands" *The Contemporary Pacific* vol.4 no.1 Spring 1992 p.195.
- 274 *Cook Islands News* 12 April 1989.
- 275 *Ibid.* 23 May 1990.
- 276 *JO. Lois et décrets* 12 janvier 1991 p.500.
- 277 *Cook Islands News* 12 October 1990.
- 278 *Pacific Islands Monthly* October 1989 p.21.
- 279 *Cook Islands News* 8 September 1990, 4 February 1991.
- 280 *Ibid.* 19 January 1991.
- 281 *Ibid.* 6 February 1991.
- 282 *The Press* 9 November 1991.
- 283 *New Zealand Herald* 28 October 1991.
- 284 *Pacific Report* 23 November 1989.
- 285 *Ibid.* 29 March 1990.
- 286 *Vanuatu Weekly* 2 May 1992.
- 287 *Construire les Loyauté* no.4 pp.14-15.
- 288 *Pacific Report* 12 April 1993.
- 289 *Ibid.* 17 January 1991.
- 290 *Fiji Times* 9 July 1992; *Tok Blong SPPF* November 1992 p.28.
- 291 Talk with the Secretary of the New Zealand Consulate in Nouméa, September 1992.
- 292 *Pacnews* 1 October 1990.
- 293 *Fiji Times* 17 August 1990; *Pacific Report* 30 August 1990.
- 294 *Fiji Times* 13 August 1992.
- 295 *Ibid.* 12 November 1993.
- 296 *Pacific Report* 10 May 1990.
- 297 *Fiji Times* 16 March 1990.
- 298 *Ibid.* 11 September 1990.

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- 299 Haut-Commissariat de la République: *Nouvelle-Calédonie. Accords de Matignon. Bilan 1991. Le chemin parcouru* p.53; *Fiji Times* 8 August 1991.
- 300 *Fiji Times* 11 September 1990.
- 301 *Pacific Report* 23 January 1992.
- 302 *Vanuatu Weekly* 1 February 1992.
- 303 *Pacific Islands Monthly* September 1992 p.10.
- 304 *Pacific Report* 3 May 1993.
- 305 Hoadley: *The South Pacific Foreign Affairs Handbook* p.210.
- 306 Ibid.
- 307 *Vanua Scope* 24 novembre 1993.
- 308 See "Loi no.88-1028 du 9 novembre 1988 portant dispositions statutaires et préparatoires à l'autodétermination de la Nouvelle-Calédonie en 1998" in *JO. Lois et décrets* 10 novembre 1988 p.14087.
- 309 *Vanua Scope* 24 novembre 1993.

Conclusion

This conclusion integrates the themes of parts 1 and 2, the domestic politics of the Pacific TOM and French foreign relations in the region, as the basis for a summary of French policy in the South Pacific since 1981. As became evident in part 2, there has been some interplay between French national politics and external relations in the South Pacific, with both positive and negative consequences for the perception of France by governments in the zone. In encouraging the economic development of the Pacific TOM, French Governments worked towards furthering links with these territories' regional neighbours. Political debate over Kanak nationalism in New Caledonia and over the role of nuclear testing in French Polynesia spilled into the arena of international politics, with the South Pacific Forum members acting as advocates of anti-colonial and anti-nuclear policies perceived in Paris as anti-French.

There are two major pitfalls in considering French policy which this work has endeavoured to avoid. The first consists of explaining presumed shifts in policy through analytical preoccupation with what are assumed to be major dilemmas. One French commentator, Jean-Christophe Victor, has suggested that progress came from crisis in the South Pacific. South Pacific countries' criticisms of French conduct in the region made Paris rethink and reshape its policy.¹ To some extent this is a valid judgement. The formation of high level committees to consider French policy in the South Pacific in part reflected a response to events in the zone. It was not merely coincidental that Mitterrand oversaw the creation of the South Pacific Council in December 1985, at a time when the South Pacific Forum was promoting the Rarotonga Treaty, when the Greenpeace affair had yet to reach its protracted conclusion, and when the issue of New Caledonian self-determination remained unsettled. The activities of Flosse as Secretary of State to the South Pacific demonstrated the concern of the Chirac Government too to respond to regional critics of France.

Yet while the administrative bodies dealing with the South Pacific came and went, the standing goal of furthering the integration of France into the region through patient dialogue and cooperation with the states of the South Pacific, articulated by Cheysson in the National Assembly in November 1981,² stood as a policy orientation which predated and transcended disputes later in the 1980s. The South Pacific Council, as well as the posts of Secretary of State to the South Pacific and Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, were expressions of a French willingness to improve relations with the zone which has subsisted regardless of changing governments in Paris. Two integral parts of that South Pacific presence, whether administered by Socialist Governments or under cohabitation, were the maintenance of support for nuclear testing until April 1992 for reasons of national defence, and an unbending refusal to unilaterally grant independence to the Kanak minority in New Caledonia because of basic democratic and constitutional considerations. Such continuity in policy should not be obscured by analytical fixation with disputes that have not durably threatened the French presence in the region.

The crisis resolution assessment of French policy formulation preferred by some French political writers³ should not moreover be taken too far in the context of French external relations with the South Pacific. Placing aside the sensationalism of contemporary press accounts, and the overstated comments of political leaders of the day, it might be asked if this model was entirely appropriate. As neither the Rarotonga Treaty nor the *Rainbow Warrior* affair posed a serious threat, either to Mitterrand, to the Fabius Government, or to French sovereignty in the South Pacific, to what extent might these issues validly be considered crises for the Fifth Republic? They might be better described as passing contretemps. The influence of Forum lobbying on French policy for the South Pacific should not be overestimated. For all their individual

and joint efforts, it cannot be said that the nations of the South Pacific brought about any policy changes in Paris on the major issues of New Caledonian self-determination or nuclear testing. Nor, more notably, did the varying degrees of discontent expressed by these countries over French policy on these subjects weaken the resolve of Paris to pursue greater cooperation with the South Pacific.

The scenario of French Governments responding, or failing to respond, to encroaching crises has some greater applicability to their exercise of domestic policy in the French Pacific, although here too its importance should not be misjudged. The succession of statutes prepared for New Caledonia in the 1980s constituted evolving responses to Kanak activism and French loyalism in the territory, but at no point did local discontent menace state institutions or sovereignty, in spite of pessimistic predictions of civil war and secession. Neither claims by the RPCR from 1984 to 1985 that Socialist reforms were leading inexorably to Kanak independence, nor Tjibaou's apocalyptic assertions from 1987 to 1988 that the Chirac Government was attempting to eliminate Kanaks, proved to be more than wild, politically-motivated invective, as unconstructive as the divisive, cliché-ridden declamations French parliamentarians voiced over New Caledonia. The predilection shown by party leaders in Nouméa and Paris from 1984 to 1988 for the politics of confrontation has receded to some degree since the signature of the Matignon Accords. The political fits and starts of the earlier period have been replaced by sustained efforts which, whatever their shortcomings, have been designed to improve the status of Melanesians in New Caledonian society, through the accordance of greater economic and administrative responsibilities to them, and by working toward the wider economic development of the territory.

While unrest disturbed New Caledonia in 1984, French Polynesia, on the other hand, could only with difficulty be described as experiencing crisis. The smooth implementation of the Internal Autonomy Statute that year contrasted with the rapid abandonment of the Lemoine Statute, which had been promulgated at the same time. The renovation of French Polynesian administration by the introduction of the new statute in 1984, and its modification in 1990, were calm, ordered responses to the lobbying of French Polynesian political leaders. Nevertheless a decade later the territory faced major problems to which statute reform alone could not adequately respond. Mismanagement by Territorial Governments since the granting of greater autonomy in 1984, political infighting in Papeete taken to absurd extremes, and the reduction of the fiscal support to the local economy provided by the nuclear test programme since the test suspension announced in April 1992, placed French Polynesia in an exceedingly difficult situation.

The second pitfall to avoid in the analysis of French relations with the South Pacific is uncritical acceptance of the responses of regional governments to French policy. This work began with examination of the administrative policy and reforms implemented in the Pacific TOM, as investigation of their functioning and problems is central to understanding the French presence in the South Pacific. The fundamental limitation of regional perspectives on France in the zone in the 1980s and into the 1990s, noted at length in chapters 6 and 7, has resided in an inability to accept or to understand the constraints French Governments faced over self-determination in New Caledonia, as well as regional incomprehension over Mitterrand's acceptance of nuclear deterrence and the implications for French Polynesia. Certain double standards evident in the stances of South Pacific states should not be disregarded. In addressing nuclear policy and decolonisation issues Australia, the largest nation in the zone, exercised a penchant for taking anti-colonial and anti-nuclear positions at France's expense while turning a blind eye to its own colonial heritage and its continuing nuclear alliance with the United States. Prime Minister Lini's acceptance of French aid at the same time as making anti-colonialist and anti-

nuclear remarks was the most pronounced example of an island leader who attacked French Government policy while accepting its benevolent aspects.

This work has preferred to look at the French Pacific from the French viewpoint in order to better understand why governments in Paris behaved in a certain manner which South Pacific Forum nations frequently found difficult to comprehend, or to sympathise with. The reactions of South Pacific states to French policy are less important in comprehending the reasoning for French regional policy than an examination of the economic, social and political structures of the Pacific TOM, the influences of French political parties, the constitutional workings of the Fifth Republic, as well as the view of the region from Paris. Regional perceptions, often clouded by misunderstandings and partisan political outlooks, have constituted more of an obstruction than an aid to rigorous examination of French regional policy.

For this reason, as well as transcending the view of French policy conduct as a response to a series of flashpoints, this conclusion presents an assessment of the implementation of French internal and external policy in the South Pacific since 1981 judged by the criteria set in Paris. A balance sheet is drawn up to enable assessment of the extent to which French Governments achieved their policy goals under Mitterrand's presidency.

In addition to dispelling the myths and misunderstandings associated with South Pacific perspectives on France and the region, so too this work has attempted to penetrate French party political posturing with the aim of seeing the extent to which French Governments differed from one another in policy conduct. In the process a great degree of continuity has been described. Just as the French preoccupation in external policy, whether overseen by Socialist or liberal-conservative governments, was to improve the Fifth Republic's relations with the South Pacific, in the administration of the Pacific TOM similar continuity was perceptible. Party propaganda of the 1980s concerning future prospects was misleading in this regard. For instance right-wing scaremongering in Nouméa and Papeete at the time of the elections of 1981 about the imminent encroachment of communism under the Socialists did not come to pass any more than did the excessively optimistic Socialist promises of a transformation of life in the French Pacific.

Over a decade has passed since Joseph Franceschi's statement of Socialist intent, offered in the National Assembly debate on the DOM-TOM in 1980, of "une nouvelle politique économique, sociale et culturelle" for the DOM-TOM "sans oublier qu'il faut rendre la parole aux intéressés".⁴ This reference to the need for political consultation with the inhabitants of the DOM-TOM, also outlined in the Eighth Plan, had certainly been acted upon in the French Pacific by the early 1990s. Kanak militancy by the FI and later by the FLNKS played no small part in prompting government reforms for New Caledonia, whether to the advantage or to disadvantage of the Fronts. The creation by the Mauroy Government of the Internal Autonomy Statute in French Polynesia, in consultation with Flosse, showed the degree to which Paris was prepared to transcend party political differences. It was the Socialists, in government for most of the period examined by this work, who played the major part in reforms in the Pacific TOM. From 1986 to 1988 their reforms in New Caledonia were overturned under Chirac, but not durably, while in French Polynesia, his administration was content to leave in place legislation which had been introduced by them. During the first months of the second period of cohabitation from March 1993 there was no indication that the Balladur Government was contemplating statute reform.

Statute reform in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia implemented by Socialist Governments from 1981 gave the inhabitants of French Polynesia and New Caledonia greater control of their own administration, and enabled them to take charge of elements of local economic, social and cultural policy. The Internal Autonomy Statute created a Territorial Government in French Polynesia, with its own Ministers, within the context of the Fifth Republic. The

Statute formally recognised local culture, and equipped territorial representatives with the means to formulate social and economic policy. After abortive attempts at statute reform by Socialist Governments and by the Chirac Government from 1984 to January 1988, the promulgation in November 1988 of the new territorial statute set up by the Matignon Accords allowed Kanaks and loyalists in New Caledonia greater influence over economic, social and cultural policy by ceding them administrative control at provincial level. Any assessment of the Matignon Accords prior to their culmination in 1998 is necessarily provisional, but as long as the cooperation between the French State and territorial parties is not disrupted by a return to violent militancy, they can be judged to have worked. This state cession of greater powers was not necessarily a good thing in the case of French Polynesia, where territorial politicians' profligate spending, divisive bickering and unimaginative administration contributed to rising debt and budgetary problems, which were in turn aggravated by the loss of territorial revenue derived from the French military presence following the suspension of nuclear testing. The administrative renovations implemented in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia were not contemplated for Wallis and Futuna, arguably the part of France least touched by Socialist reforms under Mitterrand. The modernisation of local public works went on there, largely unaffected by changing governments in Paris, as did a refusal to contemplate statute reform in Paris until 1991.

While introducing territorial administrative changes, reforms undertaken by Paris from 1981 did not transform the economic situation of the French Pacific. What were described in the Eighth Plan in 1980 as the underlying socio-economic disadvantages of the Pacific TOM remained present in the early 1990s. The geographic situation of these territories limited the extent to which economic growth might occur. The distance of the French Pacific from metropolitan France meant that goods imported from Europe, on which all three territories remained dependent, continued to be expensive owing to high freight costs. The competitive pricing of exports to Europe was likewise hindered by shipping costs, and by competition from producers closer to metropolitan France. That over 90% of New Caledonian nickel was exported to Japan rather than to France was due to the availability of nickel from sources closer to France, resulting in lower import costs to metropolitan French industry. Although developing trade links has been a part of the integration of the French Pacific with its regional neighbours, these links, as in the DOM, have yet to advance to the point of displacing dependence on expensive imports from metropolitan France.⁵ In 1993 the General Planning Commission estimated that an absolute majority of the imports of the TOM came from metropolitan France, and that an absolute majority of their exports were destined for metropolitan France.⁶ Trade with Pacific neighbours was restricted by the limited market potential of island state economies and, in the case of the larger Australian and New Zealand markets, by their own production capacity, as well as by the Australasian capacity to import goods more cheaply from other island exporters such as Fiji.

The Eleventh Plan for the DOM-TOM, published in 1993, reiterated the structural problems which had been described by the Eighth Plan thirteen years before. The economic development of the Pacific TOM was restricted by their small population bases, the narrow range of exploited resources, and their "massive" dependency on state subsidies and expertise.⁷ It was urged, as in past plans, that local production bases should be expanded, both for import substitution and for export growth, if lasting economic development was to take place. However, as mentioned above, the geographic and demographic barriers to such progress remained considerable. Past unrealistic targets such as the hope that the TOM would become self-sufficient in food had been abandoned by the Eleventh Plan. By the 1990s attempts to promote commercial agriculture in the French TOM, as in the DOM, had fallen far short of expectations held in the 1970s. State and territorial development initiatives had been unable to restore

agriculture in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia to levels it had enjoyed three decades before. Manufacturing and light industry were still of marginal importance, a reflection of small local markets, lack of resources, and the distances from major export markets. Tourism was referred to in terms of its great potential, but this potential was likewise hindered by distance from major markets, and by high prices. Plans for EEZ exploitation had still not gone beyond talk of great potentialities, whether in the fields of deep sea fishing or mining.

Apart from established industries such as mineral exploitation in New Caledonia and pearl farming in French Polynesia, no major chances for export-led economic growth in the Pacific TOM presented themselves. According to the Eleventh Plan, of the Pacific TOM, New Caledonia appeared set for the most prosperous future, although this scenario was dependent on the resolution of political tensions under the Matingon Accords.⁸ The French Polynesian economy was described by the Eleventh Plan as being in a perillous situation.⁹ Reduction in the past level of funding from the nuclear programme, difficulties in attracting tourists to the territory, and the absence of major new production areas were considered to be major troubles that needed addressing. A single sentence devoted to development prospects in Wallis and Futuna concluded that what finances locals enjoyed existed thanks solely to the presence of state administrative and social services.¹⁰ Considering the low level of exports from Wallis in Futuna this was a reasonable assessment.

As was indicated in the Eighth Plan, the existence of proportionately large state and territorial administrative and social services in the Pacific TOM served as a brake on the promotion of primary and secondary sector production. As civil service jobs continued to be better paid and more secure than private sector posts, they attracted the better educated inhabitants of the French Pacific. The gap between high civil service salaries and those received by workers and management in the private sector had not been closed and was regarded as a problem still to be solved.¹¹ Although the presence of large state and territorial administrations overseeing the operation of welfare facilities in line with metropolitan French standards had resulted in improved standards of living, in the absence of employment opportunities to welfare recipients an assistance mentality had also been instilled.¹² Welfare had to be displaced by job creation.¹³ The traditional nostrums of encouraging private investment in a variety of areas were suggested as the best manner of overcoming the employment problems of the Pacific TOM, even while past inadequacies in private sector job creation were admitted.¹⁴

The Eleventh Plan added that an evolution of mentalities was required, both in Paris, and among representatives from the DOM-TOM. The leaders of the DOM-TOM had to go beyond begging for state funding and take the initiative of resolving socio-economic problems by themselves.¹⁵ This latter point was particularly relevant to French Polynesia.¹⁶ The Plan questioned the deficiencies of state administration in the Pacific TOM. The various Ministries in Paris had to improve their coordination in the DOM-TOM and train more administrators with specialised knowledge of local conditions. Again, French Polynesia presented a good example of the consequences of lopsided planning by one Ministry without adequate coordination with others. Thirty years after the implantation of the CEP in French Polynesia, while the demands of national defence had been satisfied, officials in Paris and Papeete were still trying to resolve the social and economic consequences of the greater dependence the presence of the nuclear testing programme had promoted. Referring to the use of French Polynesia as a platform for nuclear testing, the Eleventh Plan observed: "La stratégie nationale est imparfaite quand ne sont pas mesurés et pris en compte tant les effets de civilisation de ces apports que les conséquences de leurs évolutions, de leurs suspensions ou de leurs réductions."¹⁷ A similar case could have been made for New Caledonia. French settlement there in the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries, facilitated by the confiscation of tribal lands from the indigenous inhabitants, and their cultural and social marginalisation by colonial society, had created inequalities and interethnic enmity which state reforms in the 1980s only partially addressed. Whether current and future leaders of the Fifth Republic will be capable of setting right the damage caused by their predecessors remains to be seen.

The Eleventh Plan was a revelatory document in that it highlighted the degree to which past optimism has been replaced by greater realism in Parisian administrative circles. The Plan demonstrated that the Socialist hope of radical social and economic change in the Pacific TOM from 1981 had been restricted by a range of structural considerations that government reforms may never overcome. While the idealistic Socialist future projected for France by Mitterrand and the Mauroy Government in 1981 had receded into history by 1993, the social inequalities and economic deficiencies they faced in the French Pacific remained to test the imagination of the Balladur Government and its successors.

By 1993, the Balladur Government faced fewer substantial challenges in the domain of foreign relations than in the administration of the Pacific TOM. Differences over nuclear testing and the fate of New Caledonia, to which much speculation and commentary had been devoted in the 1980s, had been calmed by the French test suspension from April 1992, and by the implementation of the Matignon Accords from 1988. The positive response of the South Pacific Forum to these two developments facilitated the dialogue with regional nations, and the greater cooperation, that French Governments had been pursuing since the 1970s.

The improvement of French relations with South Pacific countries through diplomacy and aid has been a more durable feature of French regional relations than the periodic expression of differences over nuclear testing and the fate of New Caledonia. With only rare exceptions (the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu), South Pacific states have generally hesitated to harm their relations with France over these issues. Only the Solomons and Vanuatu were prepared to disrupt diplomatic contacts by expelling or refusing to accredit French diplomats on political grounds. With the minor exception of the Hawke Government's embargo of uranium sales to France from 1983 to 1986, no South Pacific government in the 1980s adopted trade sanctions against France on the grounds of anti-nuclear or anti-colonial policy. The Lange Government, in spite of protesting the bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior* as a breach of New Zealand sovereignty, had not been willing to participate in anti-nuclear protests in waters of Moruroa when approached by Greenpeace earlier in 1985.

France, for its part, usually offered a conciliatory response to regional criticisms of its presence, while refusing steadfastly to tolerate South Pacific attempts to influence the exercise of domestic policy in the Pacific TOM. The French response to Forum lobbying in the UN over New Caledonia consisted of patient, unbending explanation of the constitutional and democratic motives for its actions, regardless of the degree of hostility to the exercise of French sovereignty over its Pacific possessions. On the subject of testing in French Polynesia, France has invoked the prerogative of its sovereignty over the territory, and the dictates of national defence policy, as adequate justification for its activities. Protests over French policy in these two areas have rightly been seen by Paris as constituting a regional challenge to its authority over the Pacific TOM. Sometimes the French defence of its policy from this challenge has involved overly peremptory ripostes. The *Rainbow Warrior* bombing proved that certain officials in the Ministry of Defence were capable of making an ill-measured response on the basis of faulty intelligence and paranoia, action which damaged France's image in the region. The expulsion in 1987 of the Australian Consul in Nouméa, for having distributed innocuous aid to Melanesians, was unconvincingly trumped up by the Chirac Government as political interference at a time when Australian comments on New Caledonian policy were an irritation.

On other occasions, French Governments have been notably patient. The maintenance of relations with the Lini Government in the 1980s, however reduced, was an example of fortitude under trying circumstances for the sake of retaining French influence in Vanuatu.

In other cases, what was considered evidence of 'French arrogance' by regional leaders when Paris refrained from meekly accepting their criticisms, was no more than the sort of reaction they themselves might have offered if a foreign power had challenged aspects of their own national policies. That French Governments refrained from international lobbying taking to task Fiji for its ethnic troubles, Australia for its heritage of discrimination against Aborigines, or Papua New Guinea for its handling of atrocities on Bougainville, is demonstrative of a degree of restraint and tolerance absent in the foreign policy conduct of the South Pacific Forum. French comments made on such issues were instead limited to their use as illustrations of why South Pacific nations should address their own internal problems before venturing to advise France on its domestic affairs.

This French avoidance of treating the internal affairs of South Pacific countries as a legitimate domain for commentary proved advantageous in improving aid relations with Fiji from the time of the coups in 1987. Good relations with Tonga were a constant during the 1980s. In spite of the philosophical distance between French Republican and Tongan monarchic values, there were no grounds for mutual discord because neither Paris nor Nuku'alofa impinged on the other's domestic policies. In these instances French circumspection, combined with the expression of good-will through aid and cooperative efforts, contributed to the aim of generally improving relations in the South Pacific.

The expansion of the French diplomatic network in the South Pacific from 1980 as Paris's response to the changing international situation there occurred in spite of both regional antipathy to France, and past French disinterest in the zone. French diplomatic relations, trade and cooperation, built up with Australia and New Zealand since the 1940s, continued regardless of certain differences of opinion. As well, France made important progress in increasing its participation in the grouping of independent nations established in the South Pacific as a result of British decolonisation from the 1960s. Although relations with the Melanesian Spearhead Group members were not a model for success in the 1980s, in the 1990s the possibility for improvement remains provided divisions in New Caledonia and French nuclear testing do not experience a resurgence. In contrast, inroads made by French diplomacy in Fiji and Polynesia have produced more positive results for Paris.

For all the improvements in French relations with the South Pacific since the 1970s, the global importance of these developments should not be exaggerated. As a consequence of the marginal importance of the South Pacific in world affairs, and considering French foreign policy preoccupations elsewhere, the zone is not likely to be a major priority for France in the rest of the 1990s. None the less, since the 1970s Paris has shown a greater awareness of its South Pacific presence, working actively to maintain its Pacific TOM and to improve its foreign relations in the zone. Unless a majority of the electorate in one or more of its Pacific Territories claims independence, France should maintain its existing presence in the South Pacific into the twenty-first century. Whether or not the Pacific TOM become independent, French Government policy is to promote their integration into the region in order to lessen dependence on a distant mainland, a positive precondition for the maintenance of good relations with neighbouring states and the furtherance of bilateral and multilateral links.

Should France's relations sour in the event of the resumption of nuclear testing or the resurgence of political violence in New Caledonia, any recommencement of South Pacific Forum lobbying over these issues will probably not greatly harm the maintenance of a French South Pacific presence.

French representation in the region has survived adverse Forum reactions before: 25 years of objections to nuclear testing in French Polynesia, disapproval of the French handling of the decolonisation of the New Hebrides, pro-independence lobbying over New Caledonia, and protests over the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, to list but the most prominent examples. If the 1980s offer any precedent, the more beneficial aspects of the French presence in the South Pacific in terms of trade, cooperation and aid will limit the extent to which the Forum would be prepared to campaign against French interests. As in the 1980s, France would in any case pursue its domestic policies in the Pacific TOM and, as far as possible, its foreign policy of regional integration, regardless of any regional hostility.

Notes

¹ "In politics, as well as in other areas, progress is often made out of crisis. Some of these elements have been obviously and purposely 'anti-French' - or, more accurately, 'anti-French policy'. But they have probably also been useful to the French diplomatic service, obliging it to rethink and reshape its policy in this part of the world." Victor: "France in the Pacific" p.344.

² See note 1, chapter 5.

³ For analysis of the traditional view of the role of crisis resolution in French politics from 1789 up till the Fifth Republic see "Government by Fits and Starts" in Pierre Avril: *Politics in France* pp.29-46. For a "crisis"-strewn analysis of French relations with the South Pacific from 1985 to 1988 see Cordonnier: *La France dans le Pacifique Sud 1962-1988* ch.3 "La France dans le cyclone et dynamique politique accélérée pour le Pacifique Sud (1985-1988)."

⁴ *JO. Débats de l'Assemblée Nationale* 11 juin 1980 p.1662.

⁵ [...] les effets économiques bien modestes de la coopération régionale ne sont pas encore pour l'Outre-Mer un levier quantitativement significatif." Commissariat Général du Plan. Groupe «Outre-Mer»: *Outre-mer: le défi des singularités. Préparation du onzième plan* p.21.

⁶ *Ibid.* p.22.

⁷ *Ibid.* pp.19, 24-25, 36.

⁸ *Ibid.* p.36.

⁹ *Ibid.* p.37.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.38.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p.97.

¹² *Ibid.* p.99.

¹³ *Ibid.* p.45.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp.100-102.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* pp.49-50.

¹⁶ The Internal Autonomy Statute was considered to represent an obstacle to better fiscal management. Reference was made to "gestions laxistes non maîtrisées par l'Etat [...] en Polynésie (dont l'autonomie exclut quasiment le contrôle)". *Ibid.* p.41.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p.29.

Appendices

Appendix 1. New Caledonia. Chronology 1981-1993

1981

26 April, 10 May. French presidential elections. In New Caledonia, 64.97% of votes in the second round are for Giscard d'Estaing.

14, 21 June. French legislative elections. In New Caledonia Roch Pidjot (UC) and Jacques Lafleur (RPCR) are elected.

7-12 August. Henri Emmanuelli, Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, visits New Caledonia. He calls for radical social change through land reform and Melanesian development.

19 September. Pierre Declercq, the Secretary-General of the UC, is murdered in Nouméa.

1982

4 February. Government reform law for New Caledonia.

22 July. The MOP occupies the Territorial Assembly.

15 October. Government ordinances concerning New Caledonian economic development; the creation of the Kanak Cultural, Scientific and Technical Office; recognition of the priority of Kanak clans to New Caledonian land.

1983

18-20 May. Georges Lemoine, the new Secretary of State to the DOM-TOM, visits the territory. The FI boycotts his visit, demanding that the Government undertake tangible steps towards independence.

20 May. Lemoine announces his policy goals for New Caledonia: social progress, recognition of Kanak identity and further land reform.

12 July. Nainville les Roches declaration.

25 September. French senatorial elections. Dick Ukeiwé (RPCR) is elected.

November. Lemoine announces for the first time that a self-determination referendum will be held in New Caledonia, after the adoption of a new territorial statute.

1984

31 July. The Lemoine Statute is approved by the National Assembly.

24 September 1984. Creation of the FLNKS.

18 November. Territorial elections in New Caledonia. They are boycotted by the FLNKS. LKS participates.

24 November. Lemoine states that the Government favours more rapid progress toward self-determination in New Caledonia.

Six former French Prime Ministers and Giscard d'Estaing call on Mitterrand to oppose government policy leading New Caledonia to independence.

1 December. Establishment of the provisional government of Kanaky. Its president is Jean-Marie Tjibaou.

Edgard Pisani is appointed special government delegate to New Caledonia.

2 December. Jacques Toubon, Secretary-General of the RPR, states his party's opposition to New Caledonian independence.

4 December. Prime Minister Laurent Fabius announces he is assuming direct responsibility of the New Caledonia portfolio.

5 December. Ten Kanak activists are killed in an ambush near Hienghène.

12 December. Pons declares that Pisani has failed to establish order in New Caledonia. He calls for the dissolution of the Kanak provisional government.

15-17 December. Pisani begins talks with New Caledonian political leaders.

16 December. Mitterrand, speaking on TF1, states he is in favour of autonomy, leading to independence, for New Caledonia.

1985

- 7 January. Pisani announces his Propositions for New Caledonia.
- 12 January. Two FLNKS leaders, Eloi Machoro and Marcel Nonnaro, are killed by gendarmes near La Foa.
- Pisani declares a state of emergency in New Caledonia.
- 17 January. Mitterrand pays a one day visit to New Caledonia.
- 25 April. Fabius presents the Pisani/Fabius Interim statute bill.
- 28 April. LKS announces its support for the statute bill.
- 8 May. Riot in Nouméa. A curfew is declared.
- 9 May. Seven representatives supporting independence (including six for LKS) resign from the Territorial Assembly to protest RPCR statements.
- 24 May. Pisani becomes Minister for New Caledonia.
- 25 May. The FLNKS, with the exception of the FULK, announces it will participate in the forthcoming regional elections.
- 31 May. The Territorial Assembly rejects the statute bill.
- 2 June. LKS decides to participate in the scheduled regional elections.
- 14 June. The curfew is lifted.
- 24 July. Pisani announces that New Caledonian independence is inevitable.
- 8 August. After complaints from the opposition, the Constitutional Council declares the Pisani/Fabius Interim Statute invalid.
- 20 August. A new version of the statute is adopted by the National Assembly.
- 23 August. The Constitutional Council rejects further complaints about the amended statute.
- 14 September. Toubon and Chirac announce at La Foa that, should an RPR-led government be appointed in 1986, it will draw up a new statute for New Caledonia and organise a self-determination referendum.
- 29 September. Regional elections in New Caledonia.

1986

- 16, 23 March. French legislative elections. Lafleur and Maurice Nenou (RPCR) are elected Deputies for New Caledonia. Pidjot is not a candidate due to an FLNKS boycott.
- 29 April. Pons, now Minister to the DOM-TOM, presents his plan for New Caledonia.
- 17 July. Pons introduces a territorial development plan, and details of the self-determination referendum scheduled for 1987.
- 9 December. Pons meets an FLNKS delegation in Nouméa. They disagree over voter eligibility for the self-determination referendum.
- 10 December. The FLNKS calls unsuccessfully for Pons's dismissal.

1987

- 1-7 August. Pons announces an aid and development plan for New Caledonia.
- 6 August. Pons bans political marches in New Caledonia before the referendum.
- 22 August. An FLNKS demonstration in Nouméa is dispersed by gendarmes.
- 13 September. Self-determination referendum in New Caledonia. The FLNKS boycotts it. 98.30% of the 58.04% of the electorate which votes supports New Caledonia's continued adherence to the French Republic.
- 2-3 October. Pons visits New Caledonia for consultations over the forthcoming statute. The FLNKS refuses to meet him.
- 29 October. The seven people responsible for the Hienghène ambush in December 1984 are acquitted by a Nouméan court.

1988

- 22 January. The Pons Statute is promulgated.
- 22 April. On Ouvéa, Kanak activists kill four gendarmes and take 27 hostage at Fayaoué.
- 24 April. First round of the French presidential elections.

Regional elections in New Caledonia.

4 May. The 23 remaining hostages held by Kanak militants on Ouvéa are freed after a military assault. Two soldiers and 19 Kanaks are killed.

7 May. The FLNKS declares that after their capture, four Kanaks were killed by French soldiers on Ouvéa.

8 May. Mitterrand is re-elected with 52.06% of the national vote. In New Caledonia, 89.54% of votes are for Chirac.

5, 12 June. French legislative elections. Lafleur and Nenou are re-elected Deputies for New Caledonia.

26 June. Signature of the Matignon Accord.

14 July. Beginning of one year of direct administration of New Caledonia by the French Government.

20 August. Signature of the Oudinot Accord.

6 November. French national referendum on the acceptance of the Matignon Accords. Voters support them.

1989

4 May. Assassination on Ouvéa of Tjibaou, the FLNKS President, and Yeiwené Yeiwené, his Vice-President, by Djubelli Wea.

11 June. Provincial elections in New Caledonia.

July. The USTKE withdraws from the FLNKS.

14 July. Transfer of powers of government to New Caledonia's provinces.

1990

10 January. A new law extends the amnesty on political crimes included under the Matignon Accords. Henceforth, the amnesty applies to those convicted of murder.

The FLNKS elects Paul Némaoutyine as its new President, and Rock Wamytan as its new Vice-President.

April. Lafleur sells his mining company to the North Province.

1991

31 January. The North Province announces its decision to increase its holdings in the mining company formerly owned by Lafleur. As a result, the North Province holds a 95% interest in the company.

11 April. LKS withdraws from the Matignon Accords.

27 April. Lafleur announces at an RPCR convention his hope of reaching a consensual solution with the FLNKS that would avoid any confrontation implied in the 1998 self-determination referendum.

The FLNKS, holding its tenth congress at La Foa, does not respond to this announcement, but reiterates its goal of independence for New Caledonia.

28 June. Alain Juppé, the RPR Secretary-General, declares in Nouméa that territorial autonomy and decentralisation should be increased. He states also that the RPR has no intention of upsetting the Matignon Accords should it form a government before 1998.

10 August. Némaoutyine criticises the pace of land redistribution in New Caledonia.

19 September. A Nouméan administrative tribunal annuls the Advisory Council on Custom, upholding complaints from tribal chiefs concerning biased appointments to the Council.

17-18 October. At the third annual meeting of the Matignon Accords Monitoring Committee in Paris, Prime Minister Edith Cresson states her intention of continuing the work of her predecessor, Rocard, in supporting the accords.

1992

26 January. The FULK announces its dissolution in order to form a new party, Congrès Populaire.

3 March. The FLNKS accuses the Government of failing to meet its obligations in increasing the number of Kanaks receiving tertiary education.

13-14 March. A riot in central Nouméa started by around 100 Kanak youths results in the destruction of the Prisunic department store. 13 Kanaks are arrested.

16 April. Prime Minister Pierre Bérégovoy meets François Burck, the UC President, and Léopold Jorédié, the UC Vice-President, in Paris. Bérégovoy states the Government's continued support for the Matignon Accords.

2 May. After a visit to meet government representatives in Paris, Néaoutyine announces that the Matignon Accords appear to be benefiting the South Province to a greater extent than the rest of New Caledonia.

29-31 August. FLNKS congress at Touho reaffirms the goal of Kanak independence through ongoing participation in the Matignon Accords.

November. After the North Province purchases a controlling interest in Nouméa's Surf Novotel, Hotel Ibis and its Casino, Lafleur protests that it has violated the spirit of the Matignon Accords in not using its development funds for local projects.

Tribal chiefs on Lifou occupy the town hall at Wé to protest the municipal council's construction of new port facilities without the agreement of custom authority.

1993

January. Juppé informs Burck that, if in government after the legislative elections in 1993, the RPR would pursue the implementation of the Matignon Accords, but with some adjustments.

2-4 February. In Paris, the mid-term review of the implementation of the Matignon Accords takes place. Bérégovoy reiterates government support for the accords.

26 February. Mitterrand, in an RFO broadcast to the DOM-TOM, declares that he is open to a revision of the Matignon Accords, if desired by the FLNKS and the RPCR.

March. In the French legislative elections, Lafleur and Nénou are re-elected Deputies for New Caledonia.

15 April. Dominique Perben, Minister to the DOM-TOM in the Government of Edouard Balladur, states in an RFO interview that he does not wish to agitate statute debate in the DOM-TOM, and prefers to concentrate on socio-economic problems.

14 June. Perben visits New Caledonia, declaring his wish to pursue the dialogue installed by the Matignon Accords.

13 November. The UC declares that it wants a negotiated independence in 1998, with a predetermined calendar for the transfer of administrative powers.

24 November. Palika announces that it will not be attending the meeting of the Matignon Accords coordinating committee, scheduled to be held in Paris from 6 to 9 December. Palika considered the meeting routine and not worth the effort.

27 November. Considering its agenda to be unproductive, Néaoutyine, as President of the FLNKS, decides not to go to the coordinating committee meeting in Paris.

**Appendix 2. Nainville les Roches Declaration
12 July 1983**

1) Volonté commune des participants de voir confirmer définitivement l'abolition du fait colonial par la reconnaissance à l'égalité de la civilisation mélanésienne et la manifestation de sa représentativité par la coutume dans des institutions à définir.

2) Reconnaissance de la légitimité du peuple kanak, premier occupant du territoire, se voyant reconnaître en tant que tel un droit inné et actif à l'indépendance dont l'exercice doit se faire dans le cadre de l'autodétermination ouverte également pour des raisons historiques aux autres ethnies dont la légitimité est reconnue par les représentants du peuple kanak.

3) Favoriser l'exercice de l'autodétermination est "une vocation de la France", qui doit permettre d'aboutir à un choix, y compris celui de l'indépendance. Il faut préparer cette démarche vers l'autodétermination, qui sera le fait du peuple calédonien défini par la logique ci-dessus admise, lorsqu'il en ressentira la nécessité. Pour préparer cette démarche, chacun est conscient qu'il faut élaborer un statut d'autonomie interne qui sera spécifique, qui sera évolutif et qui marquera donc une phase de transition en prenant en compte les données politiques et économiques, car il n'y aura de développement économique qu'avec stabilité politique.

Adopted by the FI, FNSC and Georges Lemoine on behalf of the French Government.

Source: Cited in *Le Monde* 14 juillet 1983.

Appendix 3. Wallis and Futuna. Chronology 1980-1993

1980

28 September. French senatorial elections. Sosefo Papilio (RPR), Wallis and Futuna's Senator, is re-elected.

1981

26 April, 10 May. French presidential elections. In the second round, Giscard d'Estaing obtains 97.37% of the vote in Wallis and Futuna.

21, 28 June. French legislative elections. Benjamin Brial, RPR Deputy for Wallis and Futuna, is re-elected with 51.36% of the vote.

12 August. Emmanuelli visits Wallis and Futuna. He announces a public works programme.

1982

21 March. Territorial elections. Brial's RPR group gains 11 of 20 seats. Manuele Lisiahi (RPR) is elected Territorial Assembly President.

1983

6, 13 March. Municipal elections. In New Caledonia, Uvea mo Futuna, a Wallisian party, presents candidates in Nouméa. None are elected.

November. Futuna's two kings unsuccessfully demand TOM status for Futuna. Three RPR Councillors in the Territorial Assembly join the UDF group to form an 11 member coalition. One of the defectors, Falakiko Gata, is elected Territorial Assembly President.

1984

17 June. European parliamentary elections. In Wallis and Futuna, the UDF/RPR coalition gains 82.41% of the vote.

18 November. Territorial elections in New Caledonia. Uvea mo Futuna presents a Wallisian list in the South Region, but fails to win any seats.

1985

January. In Nouméa, six custom chiefs from Wallis and Futuna declare their opposition to independence for New Caledonia.

27 March. The Fabius Government's development plan for Wallis and Futuna is finalised.

April. Falakiko Gata forms UPL, an independent, local party.

8 May. At Ponérihouen, in New Caledonia, Kanak activists occupy a farm to protest against its employment of Wallisian labour.

June. Falakiko Gata meets Mitterrand and Fabius in Paris. He reaffirms Wallis and Futuna's ties with France, but criticises French development plans.

October. Confrontations between Kanaks and Wallisians on the outskirts of Nouméa.

29 November. Near Poya, in New Caledonia, the FLNKS takes ten hostages in an attempt to force Wallisian labourers to leave the area.

1986

13 January. Pierre Joxe, then Minister of the Interior, visits Wallis and Futuna.

16, 23 March. French legislative elections. Brial is re-elected Deputy for Wallis and Futuna.

May. Pons, Flosse and Lafleur visit the territory together to announce the policy goals of the Chirac Government.

29 July. Public television broadcasting begins on Wallis.

31 August-1 September. Chirac visits Wallis and Futuna. He announces increased development funding.

29 October. After verbal threats from Wallisians for his refusal to repatriate an unpopular functionary, Jacques Le Hénaff, the Superior Administrator of Wallis and Futuna, declares a state of emergency.

31 October. The state of emergency is lifted after the arrival of a platoon of gendarmes from New Caledonia.

27-28 December. Cyclone Raja hits Futuna, destroying 340 homes and killing one person.

1987

15 March. Territorial elections. Seven of the 20 seats in the Territorial Assembly are obtained by the RPR group, seven by the UDF and six by UPL.

17 March. Falakiko Gata is elected to the post of Territorial Assembly President, leading a UPL/RPR coalition with 13 seats.

28 October. Appointment of Gérard Lambette, Le Hénaff's replacement as Superior Administrator.

9-11 December. Pons visits Wallis and Futuna to consult local leaders.

1988

16 March. Pons pays a one-day visit to Mata Utu to open a new high school.

24 April, 8 May. French presidential elections. In Wallis and Futuna, 73.19% of votes go to Chirac in the second round.

5,12 June. French legislative elections. Brial is re-elected Deputy.

23 June. Kamilo Gata (UDF), Brial's opponent in the elections, lodges a complaint about electoral irregularities with the Superior Administrator.

23 December. Promulgation of the decision by the Constitutional Council to annul Brial's election due to polling fraud.

1989

15 January. Kamilo Gata defeats Brial in a rerun of 1988 legislative elections. Gata is elected Deputy on a presidential majority platform.

May. Creation of the UO in Nourméa.

11 June. Provincial elections in New Caledonia. The UO wins two seats in the South Province.

18 June. European parliamentary elections. In Wallis and Futuna 54.86% of the vote is for the PS.

24 August. Rocard visits Wallis and Futuna. He calls for development and solidarity with France.

1990

6 February. Cyclone Ofa causes 52MFF worth of damage on Wallis and Futuna.

31 July. Le Pensec visits Wallis to open a college.

1 August. In Papeete, just after his departure from Mata Utu, Le Pensec announces that round table discussions on territorial economic development will be held in 1991.

1991

13 June. A delegation from the Territorial Assembly meets Le Pensec in Paris to discuss a territorial development plan.

1992

22 March. Territorial elections. Independents gain 11 seats, the RPR gains six, and presidential majority gains three.

25 March. Soane Uhila is elected Territorial Assembly President, leading an alliance of presidential majority and independent Councillors. For the first time since 1964, the RPR is not in the governing majority in the Territorial Assembly.

29-31 July. Le Pensec visits Mata Utu. He announces to the Territorial Assembly that he wants to receive reform proposals from local representatives as a basis for the redefinition of Wallis and Futuna's statute.

1993

12 March. An earthquake hits Futuna, killing three people and injuring twelve others. Le Pensec allocates 4MF CFP of emergency aid and sends around 100 relief workers to the island.

28 March. Kamilo Gata (MRG) is re-elected Deputy for Wallis and Futuna in the second round of the French legislative elections.

May. The two kings of Futuna decree that, to appease God after the earthquake, their subjects must dedicate their Sundays to worship, to the exclusion of business and leisure activities.

June. Philippe Legrix, the Superior Administrator, cuts off state funding to the kings, declaring that their decree infringes civil liberties. He warns that the decree must be lifted by 30 September or further state reprisals will be made.

18 June. Perben visits Wallis and Futuna. He announced that a further 400MF CFP is to be provided for cyclone reconstruction.

3 October. After a power cut, interpreted as state reprisals against Futunan dissent, several Futunans beat up Jean Mauro, Legrix's delegate on Futuna. The local administrative office and official vehicles are vandalised.

4 October. Ten gendarmes arrive from Nouméa. Two people are arrested. The two Wallisian kings lift their decree.

**Appendix 4. French Polynesia. Chronology
1981-1993**

1981

26 April, 10 May. French presidential elections. Giscard d'Estaing gains 50.45% of votes cast in French Polynesia.

21 June. In the first round of the legislative elections in French Polynesia, Gaston Flosse (RPR) is re-elected Deputy for East Polynesia (second constituency).

5 July. Jean Juventin (UDF) is re-elected Deputy for West Polynesia (first constituency).

13-20 August. Emmanuelli visits French Polynesia. He announces the creation of a working party on a new territorial statute and development plan.

1982

23 May. Territorial elections in French Polynesia. Tahoeraa Huiraatira, led by Flosse, forms a coalition government.

29 August. Flosse resigns as Deputy after being elected Territorial Vice-President. Tutaha Salmon (RPR) is elected in a by-election as Deputy for East Polynesia.

1984

17 June. European parliamentary elections. The UDF/RPR coalition gains 61.63% of French Polynesian votes. Flosse is elected as a French representative to the European Parliament.

6 September. French Polynesia's Internal Autonomy Statute is promulgated.

14 September. Flosse becomes the first elected Territorial President.

1985

13 February. In Nouméa, Flosse signs the Interterritorial Alliance between French Polynesia and New Caledonia with Ukeiwé.

10 April. Following proceedings instigated by Pisani, the Interterritorial Alliance is annulled.

29 June. In Papeete, Flosse and Ukeiwé sign a new Interterritorial Alliance, which omits the clause contested by Pisani.

18 December. The number of seats in the Territorial Assembly is increased to 41.

27 December. At Flosse's request, Mitterrand dissolves the Territorial Assembly after the collapse of the Territorial Government.

1986

16 March. First round of the French legislative elections. Flosse is elected Deputy for East Polynesia. Alexandre Léontieff (RPR) wins the other seat.

20 March. Edouard Fritch, Flosse's proxy, becomes Deputy of East Polynesia after Flosse is appointed Secretary of State to the South Pacific.

16, 23 March. Territorial elections. Tahoeraa Huiraatira wins 23 seats.

15 April. Flosse is re-elected Territorial President. He announces education, jobs and housing for the young as his priorities.

May. Pons visits French Polynesia. He announces the support of the Chirac Government for the Internal Autonomy Statute.

1-2 September. Chirac visits French Polynesia and meets local leaders.

24 November. A series of strikes in French Polynesia since early November culminate in a general strike.

11 December. The general strike ends.

1987

9 February. Flosse resigns as Territorial President due to his work as Secretary of State to the South Pacific.

12 February. Jacques Teuira (Tahoeraa Huiraatira) is elected Territorial President.

23 October. Rioting and looting in Papeete as conflict over a dockers' strike escalates.

24 October. High Commissioner Pierre Angéli declares a 12-day state of emergency and imposes a curfew on Papeete and its suburbs.

1 November. After the quelling of the riot and the arrest of trade unionists, Angéli lifts the curfew.

7 December. Teuira resigns after Alexandre Léontieff breaks with Tahoeraa Huiraatira, forms a new majority coalition party in the Territorial Assembly, and tables a no-confidence vote in the President.

9 December. Léontieff is elected Territorial President.

1988

8 May. Second round of the French presidential elections. In French Polynesia Mitterrand receives 53.47% of the vote.

12, 26 June. French legislative elections in French Polynesia. Léontieff (RPR/PS) is elected Deputy for West Polynesia. Emile Vernaudo (Ai'a Api) is elected Deputy for East Polynesia.

1989

21 January. The French Government and the Territorial Government sign a development plan for 1989-1993.

16 May. The Territorial Assembly receives documents on European integration and the TOM, but only after the Rocard Government's signature of them.

26 May. In protest, the Territorial Assembly recommends that French Polynesian voters boycott the forthcoming European parliamentary elections.

18 June. European parliamentary elections. 89.24% of French Polynesian voters abstain.

24-27 August. Rocard visits French Polynesia. He calls for continued development and partnership with France. He also announces a reduction in the annual number of nuclear tests made in French Polynesia.

1990

14 February. Vernaudo is excluded from Léontieff's administration for having negotiated with Flosse over forming a new majority in the Territorial Assembly.

9 April. Supporters of Flosse and Vernaudo disrupt a Territorial Assembly meeting by occupying the debating chamber after the failure of a vote of censure against the Léontieff Government.

15-18 May. Mitterrand visits French Polynesia. He calls for labour and social reform as well as the introduction of personal income tax.

31 May. At the Elysée, Mitterrand reconciles Léontieff and Vernaudo.

12 July. The Internal Autonomy Statute is modified.

1991

17 March. Territorial elections in French Polynesia. Tahoeraa Huiraatira wins 18 seats.

21 March. Flosse and Vernaudo form a coalition government.

4 April. Flosse is elected Territorial President, with Vernaudo as Territorial Assembly President.

21 June. Beginning of a three week-long truckers' strike in Papeete in protest against Flosse's decision to increase taxes on petrol and various consumer items. In response to these protests, Flosse abandons the legislation.

September. Flosse overturns his alliance with Vernaudo and forms another with Juventin. Vernaudo retaliates by refusing to convoke the Territorial Assembly. Consequently, no territorial budget can be approved for 1992.

1992

3 April. Michel Jau, the High Commissioner, confirms the legality of the election of Juventin as Territorial Assembly President at a meeting held by a majority of Territorial Councillors outside the Territorial Assembly.

22 April. Flosse leaves Papeete for Paris to discuss French Polynesia's economic future with Le Pensec after the announcement of the suspension of nuclear testing in the territory for 1992.

13 May. Mitterrand reassures Flosse and other members of a French Polynesian delegation in Paris that they should not worry about the suspension of testing: it would only be temporary. Mitterrand promises compensatory economic assistance to French Polynesia.

14 May. A territorial development charter is initiated by the French Polynesian delegation and the French Government.

July. Jau seizes control of the territorial budget due to the Territorial Government's refusal to reduce spending.

The conclusions of the territorial development charter are presented. They express broad disenchantment with the Territorial Government and the Opposition.

1993

January. Flosse and Juventin lead a delegation to Paris to negotiate territorial funding. Talks with Le Pensec end in disagreement. The delegation asks for a meeting with Bérégovoy due to its dissatisfaction over the level of proposed development funding.

28 January. The French Government agrees to provide an extra amount of approximately 115MFF for special development funding.

13 March. First round of the legislative elections in French Polynesia. Flosse is elected Deputy for East Polynesia.

28 March. Second round of the French legislative elections. Juventin (RPR) is elected Deputy for West Polynesia.

11 June. Flosse introduces a progressive income tax which peaks at 3% on monthly incomes over 8,250FF, as well as new taxes on wine, petrol and unearned income.

21 June. Perben addresses the Territorial Assembly, assuring its members that the Ballardur Government will retain existing development agreements, and announcing an advance of 160-200MFF to allow the Territorial Government to cover its budget deficit.

22 July. In Paris Perben opens negotiations on territorial development with a delegation from French Polynesia.

15 September. Flosse announces in Papeete that the Ballardur Government has undertaken to deploy 3,410MFF to assist territorial economic recovery from 1994-1998.

Appendix 5. Interterritorial Alliance, 13 February 1985

Protocole d'Alliance des Territoires Français du Pacifique

Les Gouvernements des territoires français de Polynésie et de Nouvelle-Calédonie, habilités par délibération de leurs Assemblées Territoriales et représentés par leur Présidents.

Conscients d'appartenir à une même civilisation dont la valeur est, au-delà des identités ou des diversités culturelles, universelle et qui est fondée sur l'idée de liberté.

Profondément attachés à cette conception du destin de l'homme et à son expression politique - la démocratie.

Respectueux des principes de légalité républicaine et de souveraineté nationale qui assurent l'égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction d'origine, de race ou de religion, par le suffrage universel, égal et secret.

Fidèles à la Constitution et aux lois qui définissent les statuts de leurs Territoires en vertu desquelles il bénéficient d'une large autonomie interne dans le cadre de la République leur permettant de s'administrer librement par leurs représentants élus.

Constatant que l'idée de civilisation et le concept de démocratie qu'ils partagent sont mis en péril, dans cette partie du Pacifique, par des tentatives d'hégémonie faites sous couvert d'idéologies.

Constatant aussi que la légalité républicaine, le respect de la Constitution et l'application des lois statutaires sont actuellement menacés dans l'un des territoires français du Pacifique.

Constatant enfin qu'il existe entre eux une communauté d'intérêts, fondée non seulement sur leur appartenance à la nation française dont ils partagent la langue et la culture, mais aussi sur leur situation géographique et le niveau de leur développement économique et social.

Convaincus qu'ils ont le devoir de participer à la défense du monde libre dans cette partie du Pacifique, de protéger les droits de l'homme et du citoyen sur leur sol et de préserver l'intégrité du territoire national.

Persuadés en outre qu'une alliance entre les territoires français du Pacifique, établie sur la base d'un idéal commun de liberté, d'égalité et de fraternité et sur la solidarité des peuples qui les composent est devenue nécessaire pour assurer la prospérité économique, le progrès social et le développement culturel de leurs habitants.

Article 1er - Les Territoires français du Pacifique concluent une Alliance pour défendre et protéger leurs intérêts communs en matière politique, économique, sociale et culturelle.

Article 2 - Une conférence des Présidents des Gouvernements de la Polynésie Française et de la Nouvelle-Calédonie est créée.

Cette conférence se réunit au moins quatre fois par an, successivement dans chacun des Territoires composant l'Alliance et sous la présidence du représentant du Territoire dans lequel elle a eu lieu. La première réunion se tiendra à Nouméa dans le mois qui suit la signature du présent protocole.

Article 3 - La conférence des Présidents a pour objet de permettre à ses membres:

- de prendre contact, au nom de l'Alliance, avec d'autres territoires ou Etats du Pacifique, afin de nouer avec eux des relations de nature à favoriser un rapprochement entre les peuples du Grand Océan.
- d'échanger des informations concernant la situation de chacun des territoires de l'Alliance.
- d'élaborer une politique commune de développement économique, notamment en matière de tourisme, d'agriculture, d'aquaculture.

- de mettre en commun l'expérience acquise au cours de la mise en place des institutions territoriales issues de leurs statuts respectifs afin d'améliorer le fonctionnement de l'autonomie interne.

La conférence des Présidents fixe en outre la périodicité et l'ordre du jour de la commission permanente.

Article 4 - Les Présidents des Gouvernements des territoires français du Pacifique membres de l'Alliance désignent chacun deux ministres ou conseillers territoriaux pour participer aux travaux de la Commission Permanente. Ils se notifient mutuellement la composition de leur délégation respective avant chaque réunion de la dite commission

Les membres de la délégation permanente peuvent s'adjoindre des experts ou des commissaires qui n'ont pas voix délibérative. Ils se réunissent sur convocation de la Conférence des Présidents dans le territoire qui a organisé la dernière conférence et sous la présidence de l'un des représentants de ce territoire.

Article 5 - La commission permanente est chargée

- de mettre en œuvre les projets adoptés par la conférence des Présidents.
- de proposer à la dite conférence toute mesure de nature à faciliter l'harmonisation des diverses réglementations des territoires membres de l'Alliance.

Article 6 - Le secrétariat de l'Alliance est assuré par un Secrétaire Général désigné par la conférence des Présidents, de sa propre initiative ou à la demande de la Commission permanente, afin d'approfondir l'étude d'un domaine ou d'un problème particulier.

Article 8 - Chaque Territoire supporte la charge financière résultant du déplacement et de l'hébergement des membres de sa délégation.

Le Territoire concerné assure en outre les frais d'organisation de la conférence des Présidents et de la commission permanente qui se tiennent chez lui.

Article 9 - Le financement des actions qui ont été conjointement décidées est apporté par chacun des territoires, membres de l'Alliance. Des conventions particulières définiront, le cas échéant, la répartition des charges entre les Territoires.

Article 10 - Le territoire des îles Wallis et Futuna peut adhérer au présent protocole: un avenant déterminera alors les modifications qui doivent y être apportées pour tenir compte du statut de ce Territoire.

Article 11 - Le présent protocole est conclu pour une durée indéterminée. Il pourra être dénoncé à tout moment par l'un des Territoires qui y a adhéré à condition que les autres Territoires en soient avisés. Dans ce cas un accord particulier définira les mesures transitoires applicables au règlement des actions en cours et les modalités de liquidation des financements conjoints visés à l'article 9.

Article 12 - Les décisions prises en application du présent protocole s'exécutent dans le cadre des pouvoirs et des attributions qui ont été conférées aux institutions de chacun des territoires adhérents.

Le Président du Gouvernement de la Polynésie Française
Gaston Flosse

Le Président du Gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Calédonie
Dick Ukeiwé

Ratified in Nouméa on 13 February 1985.

Source: Cited in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* 25 janvier 1985.

Appendix 6. French Regional Diplomacy. Chronology 1980-1993

1980

June. Robert Puissant, the first resident French Ambassador in Fiji, arrives in Suva.

30 July. Yves Rodriguez assumes his responsibilities as the first resident French Ambassador to Vanuatu.

12 November. Antoine Colombani, France's first resident Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, has his accreditation received in Port Moresby.

1982

4-8 May. Staff from the Elysée and the Quai d'Orsay organise a conference in Paris, attended by French ministers, diplomats and other officials associated with the Asia-Pacific region. Claude Cheysson, the Foreign Minister, underlines the importance of greater French economic activity in the region.

1983

9-10 March. An official landing party from Vanuatu hoists the national flag on Hunter Island and claims it and neighbouring Matthew Island for Vanuatu.

Late March. France stations marines on Matthew Island to reinforce its territorial claim to it and Hunter Island.

13-23 June. Régis Debray, the French presidential envoy to the South Pacific, tours the region.

14-15 November. Cheysson visits New Zealand. This is the first time a French Foreign Minister has visited the country. In Wellington, he discusses the EEC, French testing and New Caledonia.

1985

12 January. Robert McFarlane, the US Ambassador to France, expresses continued American support for the French presence in the South Pacific.

29-30 January. Rocard, then Minister of Agriculture, visits Canberra. He meets his Australian counterpart, John Dawkins, as well as Bill Hayden, the Australian Foreign Minister, and Bob Hawke, the Prime Minister.

31 January - 1 February. Rocard visits New Zealand. He meets Prime Minister Lange, Colin Moyle, the Minister of Agriculture, and Mike Moore, the Minister of Overseas Trade and Marketing. Discussions concern trade, New Caledonia and nuclear testing.

8 September. In Paris Mitterrand creates the South Pacific Coordination Committee to review French regional policy.

14 September. Mitterrand visits Moruroa. He restates France's intention of maintaining its Pacific presence and of continuing nuclear testing. He presides over the first meeting of the South Pacific Coordination Committee.

23 December. The Council of Ministers announces the creation of the South Pacific Council, which replaces the South Pacific Coordination Committee.

1986

18 January. Debray is appointed Secretary-General of the South Pacific Council.

26 February. First meeting of the South Pacific Council in Paris. Plans are announced for the construction of a French University of the South Pacific, and for increased regional scientific cooperation.

March. Gaston Flosse is appointed Secretary of State to the South Pacific.

28 May. In Paris, Flosse outlines French South Pacific policy to the Council of Ministers. He states the importance of the South Pacific to France and expresses his opinion that French aid, commerce and technical cooperation in the region should increase.

October. Eight years after the establishment of diplomatic relations with France, the Solomon Islands Government decides to allow the French Ambassador in Vanuatu to present his credentials in Honiara, but the plan is abandoned in face of local opposition.

November. A conference of high officials and French diplomats in the South Pacific is held in Papeete.

1987

24-29 January. Flosse visits the United States to outline French Pacific policy.

15-17 May. A conference in Nouméa for French ambassadors and senior officials in the Pacific is chaired by Flosse. He announces the South Pacific aid programme for 1988 and increased French regional cooperation.

7 April. In Paris, Chirac and seven of his ministers hold a meeting of his Interministerial Committee devoted to the South Pacific. They decide to open Consulates in Hawaii and in Micronesia.

June. In Brussels, Wilson Ifunua, the Solomon Islands' roving ambassador, is blocked by France from presenting his credentials to the EEC.

4-8 June. Flosse visits Hawaii to discuss the opening of a French Consulate there with Governor John Waihee. Flosse also visits the US naval base at Pearl Harbour and the University of Hawaii.

22 October. The Interministerial Committee devoted to the South Pacific meets in Paris to discuss and approve some Fijian requests for French aid.

1 December. Meeting of the Interministerial Committee devoted to the South Pacific. It approves more welfare spending in French Polynesia and confirms plans for the construction of the French University of the South Pacific.

1988

10-12 March. A conference is held at Huahine, in French Polynesia, for French ambassadors and senior officials in the South Pacific. The meeting resolves to promote reforms in the Pacific TOM, and to improve French relations with the region.

June. Following the defeat of the Chirac Government in the French legislative elections, the Secretariat of State to the South Pacific is disbanded by the Rocard Government. Flosse's portfolio becomes the concern of the Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific.

September. In Paris, Le Pensec announces the reactivation of the South Pacific Council.

December. France establishes a Consulate in Hawaii.

1989

10-12 February. Meeting in Nouméa of French ministers and other high officials involved with the South Pacific, attended by Le Pensec and Edwige Avice, Delegate Minister to Foreign Affairs. Announcement of the aim of opening the Pacific TOM to regional trade and cooperation.

Late February. Avice visits Australia, Western Samoa, American Samoa and Hawaii.

12 April. France's first Honorary Consul to the Cook Islands, Dianne McKegg, is appointed.

14-15 July. Philippe Baude, Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, visits Kiribati for the first dialogue meeting between South Pacific Forum representatives and other regional states.

18-19 August. Rocard, the first French Prime Minister to visit Australia, stops in Canberra and Sydney. In Canberra, he speaks to the CSIRO, the Australian Parliament, and meets Hawke and Andrew Peacock, leader of the Opposition.

23 August. Rocard visits Suva. He is both the first French Prime Minister to visit Fiji, and the first French head of government to visit an island state of the South Pacific.

12-15 November. Kolpakas, the Vanuatu Foreign Minister, visits Paris to discuss bilateral links. This is the first visit by a Vanuatu Minister since 1982. On 13 November, he meets Avice.

1990

17 May. In Papeete, Mitterrand presides over the second meeting of the South Pacific Council, inactive since 1986. Announcement of the expansion of courses offered by the French University of the South Pacific, increased French support for regional environmental protection, the establishment of a disaster relief reserve, and the intention of offering French maritime surveillance of island states' EEZs.

1991

29 April-1 May. Rocard makes the first visit to New Zealand by a French Prime Minister.

14 March. The Quai d'Orsay announces the closure of the French Embassy at Port Moresby. The decision is reversed in 1992.

October. A Cook Islands/France friendship agreement is signed in Paris by Henry and Prime Minister Cresson.

1992

March. Papua New Guinea opens its Embassy in Paris, headed by Ambassador Andrew Yauieb.

July. Meeting in Nouméa of French ministers and other high officials involved with the South Pacific. The meeting resolves that France should coordinate its disaster relief efforts with Australia and New Zealand.

1993

June. Paias Wingti, the PNG Prime Minister, announces the closure of his country's Embassy in Paris for budgetary reasons.

20 July. Lafleur is appointed by Balladur as French trade delegate to South-east Asia and the Pacific, in order to improve French trade relations.

**Appendix 7. Décret no. 85-1410 du 30 décembre 1985
relatif au Conseil du Pacifique Sud**

[...]

Article 1er. - Il est créé un Conseil du Pacifique Sud présidé par le Président de la République et, en cas d'empêchement de celui-ci, par le Premier ministre ou, à défaut, par le ministre des relations extérieures.

Le conseil comprend:

1° Le premier ministre, le ministre des relations extérieures, le ministre de la défense et le ministre chargé des territoires d'outre-mer;

2° Les ambassadeurs de France dans les Etats suivants: Australie, Nouvelle-Zélande, Samoa occidentales, Vanuatu, îles Salomon, îles Fidji, Tonga, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée;

3° Le premier ou le second délégué de la France à la commission du Pacifique Sud créée par la convention signée à Canberra le 6 février 1947;

4° Les hauts-commissaires de la République en Polynésie française et en Nouvelle-Calédonie, ainsi que l'administrateur supérieur à Wallis-et-Futuna;

5° Le commandant supérieur des forces armées de la Polynésie française, commandant du Centre d'expérimentations du Pacifique, le directeur des centres d'expérimentations nucléaires et le commandant supérieur des forces armées en Nouvelle-Calédonie.

Des membres du Gouvernement et des hauts fonctionnaires civils et militaires non mentionnés à l'alinéa précédent, ainsi que toute autre personnalité qualifiée, peuvent être appelés par le Président de la République à prendre part aux travaux du conseil sur les questions relevant de leur compétence.

Article 2. - Le président du gouvernement du territoire de la Polynésie française, le président du congrès du territoire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie et dépendances et le président de l'assemblée territoriale du territoire des îles Wallis-et-Futuna peuvent être invités à participer aux travaux du conseil.

Article 3. - Le conseil coordonne les différents aspects de la politique de la France dans le Pacifique Sud, notamment la coopération culturelle, scientifique et technique avec les Etats de la région.

Article 4. - Le secrétariat du conseil est assuré par un secrétaire général nommé par décret du Président de la République.

Article 5. - Le conseil se réunit à Paris ou dans un territoire d'outre-mer du Pacifique Sud.

Article 6. - Le Premier ministre et le ministre des relations extérieures sont chargés de l'exécution du présent décret, qui sera publié au *Journal Officiel* de la République française.

Fait à Paris, le 30 décembre 1985.

Par le Président de la République:

FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND

Le Premier ministre,
LAURENT FABIOUS

Le ministre des relations extérieures,
ROLAND DUMAS

Source: *Journal Officiel. Lois et décrets.*

**Appendix 8. Letter to the Secretary of State Charged with the
Problems of the South Pacific**

Paris, le 23 avril 1986

Le Premier ministre

Monsieur le Secrétaire d'Etat et Cher Ami,

L'une des innovations dans la composition de l'actuel Gouvernement à laquelle j'attache une importance particulière est la création d'un secrétariat d'Etat chargé des problèmes du Pacifique Sud.

Le décret définissant vos attributions prévoit que vous assistez le Ministre des Départements et Territoires d'Outre-Mer pour les problèmes de cette zone; mais j'ai estimé, en accord avec lui, que ce cadre ne pouvait définir à lui seul votre mission au sein du Gouvernement et qu'il convenait de préciser celle-ci par la présente lettre.

Vous exercerez la compétence définie par ce décret sur l'ensemble des territoires de la République dans la zone du Pacifique Sud. Il conviendra, en outre, que vous soyez étroitement associé à la conduite de la politique de la France à l'égard des Etats insulaires et riverains de cette région. Cette association prendra notamment la forme d'une participation aux négociations relatives aux droits de pêche, aux droits de trafic aérien et aux droits de diffusion concernant le Pacifique Sud.

Dans le cadre de la politique extérieure française et en liaison avec le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, vous pourrez établir avec les Etats de votre zone de compétence, les relations qui seront nécessaires à l'accomplissement des missions qui vous seront confiées.

Mais au-delà de ces missions spécifiques, votre action tendra essentiellement à assurer le rayonnement de nos activités économiques et de notre technologie, de nos scientifiques et de notre capacité de recherche, de notre culture et de celle des peuples du Pacifique. Cette action suppose la mobilisation des moyens dont dispose notre pays afin de développer les territoires français du Pacifique Sud ainsi que la coopération que ces derniers peuvent avoir avec les pays de la zone. Il vous appartient de donner sa pleine efficacité à cette mobilisation.

Ainsi que le prévoit le décret d'attribution, vous disposerez pour accomplir votre mission des services du Ministère des Départements et Territoires d'Outre-Mer. En outre, vous recevrez en tant que de besoin le concours du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et du Ministère de la Coopération. Vous disposerez en outre, par l'intermédiaire des représentants du Gouvernement, des services extérieurs des Ministères techniques dans chacun des territoires de la zone.

Votre mission, qui s'exercera au cœur d'un océan appelé à jouer un rôle croissant dans les années à venir, vous conduira à résider très largement sur place, tout en disposant de la possibilité d'entretenir avec le Gouvernement les relations nécessaires. Je veillerai donc à ce que les moyens qui vous sont attribués tiennent compte des contraintes particulières qui vous sont imposées.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur le Secrétaire d'Etat, l'assurance de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Aussi ma très cordiale amitié,

Jacques CHIRAC

Source: photocopy.

Appendix 9. France and South Pacific Nuclear Issues. Chronology 1981-1993

1981

- 29 May. Hernu announces a freeze on French nuclear testing while a study is made concerning the test programme's future.
- 2 June. The French Defence Ministry announces the resumption of its nuclear testing.
- 17 June. Prime Minister Muldoon meets Mitterrand in Paris. Mitterrand confirms the Socialist Government's willingness to continue nuclear testing.
- 10-11 August. A South Pacific Forum meeting at Port Vila calls for a halt to French nuclear testing.
- 12 September. The Australia/France Nuclear Transfers Agreement, regulating Australian uranium exports and signed on 7 January 1981, comes into force.

1982

- 11 March. Prime Minister Mara, on his second official visit to Paris, meets Mitterrand. He reiterates Fijian opposition to French nuclear testing.
- 2-29 June. The Pacific Trade Union Forum boycotts French consumer products in the South Pacific to express opposition to French nuclear testing. The boycott is largely ineffectual.
- 24 June. The PNG representative at the UN General Assembly calls for a South Pacific nuclear free zone and for the halt of French testing.
- 26-28 June. The Tazieff mission surveys Moruroa.
- 28 July. The PNG Public Service Union protests outside the French Embassy in Port Moresby against French testing.
- October. At the UN General Assembly in New York, Rabbie Namaliu, the PNG Foreign Minister, expresses his country's opposition to French testing.
- 10 October. At the UN General Assembly Moses Qionibaravi, the Fijian Foreign Minister, criticises French nuclear testing.

1983

- 17 May. Dennis Lulei, the Solomons Foreign Minister, faxes a statement condemning French testing to the French Embassy in Port Vila.
- 8-9 June. Prime Minister Hawke meets Mauroy and Cheysson in Paris.
- 10 June. In Paris, Hawke announces that Australia will suspend its uranium shipments to France until at least October 1984, to protest against continued French nuclear testing.
- 17 June. Sione Tongilava, the Tongan Lands Minister, condemns nuclear testing in the South Pacific.
- 20 June. Debray meets Muldoon in Wellington. He proposes the organisation of a scientific mission to Moruroa.
- 22 June. Debray meets Hawke in Canberra. He proposes to Hawke that Australia send a scientific observer to Moruroa. Hawke and Hayden state their Government's continued rejection of French nuclear testing.
- 24 June. Debray visits Port Moresby. Mr Nilkare, the PNG Foreign Minister, protests to him over continued French nuclear testing.
- July. In Port Vila, the French Ambassador to Vanuatu asks Solomon Mamaloni, the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, if he can present his credentials in Honiara. Mamoloni refuses due to his government's opposition to French nuclear testing.
- Debray visits Fiji. Jonati Mavoa, the Fijian Foreign Minister, tells him of Fiji's continued rejection of French nuclear testing.
- 28-29 August. South Pacific Forum meeting at Canberra. The Forum's declaration opposes French nuclear testing.
- 18 September. Australia accepts the French invitation to participate in a scientific inspection of Moruroa.

October. At the UN General Assembly, Fiji calls for an international ban on French nuclear testing.

25-29 October. The Atkinson mission visits Moruroa.

1984

July. An ALP conference resolves that the Hawke Government should continue its ban on uranium exports to France until French nuclear testing is halted.

11 July. Tony Bais, the PNG acting Foreign Minister, describes the Atkinson Report on Moruroa as "inconclusive" and reiterates his country's opposition to French testing.

13 July. Mamaloni restates the Solomon Islands' rejection of French testing.

27-28 August. South Pacific Forum conference in Tuvalu. The Forum assesses the Atkinson Report, finds it inconclusive, and reiterates its opposition to French testing.

8 October. Michael Somare, the PNG Prime Minister, restates his country's condemnation of the continuation of French testing.

10 October. Senator Peter Walsh, the Australian Energy and Resources Minister, offers confirmation of the Government's decision to continue its ban on uranium shipments to France by declaring it would buy eight shipments of uranium contracted to be shipped there between 1982 and 1988.

14 October. The Australian Government gives official confirmation of its decision to halt uranium exports to France for another two years.

1985

10 July. DGSE agents sink the *Rainbow Warrior* in Auckland Harbour.

12 July. Arrest of Alain Mafart and Dominique Prieur, two French agents implicated in the bombing, in Auckland.

19-27 July. Jean-Michel Baylet, the French Secretary of State to External Relations, tours New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa to explain French support for nuclear deterrence.

4-6 August. South Pacific Forum meeting on Rarotonga. On 6 August, the Rarotonga Treaty is signed. Vanuatu refuses to sign the Treaty, calling it "incomprehensive". Tonga also refuses, because it does not oppose French testing, and does not wish to obstruct the US regional nuclear presence.

7 August. Mitterrand condemns the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing and orders French police to cooperate with New Zealand police inquiries.

17 August. *Le Monde* announces the responsibility of the DGSE for the bombing.

26 August. Public release of the Tricot Report, an inquiry into the responsibility for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, ordered by Mitterrand. Bernard Tricot, in charge of the inquiry, declares that DGSE agents were probably not to blame for the bombing. David Lange, the New Zealand Prime Minister, denounces the report as a whitewash.

1 September. In Washington Kim Beazley, the Australian Defence Minister, declares that the Rarotonga Treaty was aimed primarily at France.

6 September. The New Zealand Government informs France of its intention to seek compensation for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing through the offices of the UN and the International Court.

12 September. Hayden calls Bernard Follin, the French Ambassador to Australia, into his Canberra office. He delivers a message condemning "provocative" French actions in the South Pacific.

14 September. Mitterrand visits Moruroa. He restates France's intention of maintaining its Pacific presence and of continuing nuclear testing.

16 September. After Mitterrand's visit to Moruroa, Mara condemns Mitterrand's announcement that France intends to continue nuclear testing in French Polynesia.

20 September. Vice-Admiral Pierre Lacoste, head of the DGSE, is dismissed for his role in the organisation of the mission that sunk the *Rainbow Warrior*. Hernu tenders his resignation.

23 September. On behalf of the French Government, Fabius apologises to Lange for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing. In New York Geoffrey Palmer, the New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister, meets French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas to set up an arbitration working party.

9 October. At the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Lini of Vanuatu, Mr Giheno, the PNG Foreign Minister, and Richard Woolcott, the Australian representative, condemn continued French nuclear testing.

10 October. At the UN General Assembly, Fiji, Columbia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru repeat calls for the end of French nuclear testing.

22 November. Prieur and Mafart are sentenced in Auckland by the New Zealand High Court to ten years' imprisonment for manslaughter.

2 December. Tofilau Eti Alesana, the Western Samoan Prime Minister, calls on France to conduct its tests in metropolitan France.

1986

5 February. Tuvalu announces it barred a visit by a French naval vessel in January to protest French testing.

6-7 February. A South Pacific Forum delegation visits Paris to obtain French support for the Rarotonga Treaty. The French delegation warns that the Treaty conflicts with French security interests.

26 February. France decides to suspend the importation of New Zealand lambs' brains, a decision which is followed from February to April by the announcement of the blocking of, or added customs checks on, New Zealand wool, meat, fish, potatoes, and kiwi fruit.

23 April. In Christchurch Crown Prince Tupouto'a, the Tongan Foreign Minister, announces that Tonga is not concerned about French nuclear testing and recognises France's right to conduct nuclear tests in French Polynesia.

31 May. Lange declares that New Zealand will not negotiate with France over the release of Mafart and Prieur.

19 June. The French Government announces that France and New Zealand have agreed to submit their differences over the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing to the arbitration of the Secretary-General of the UN, Perez de Cuellar.

7 July. France and New Zealand announce de Cuellar's arbitration ruling of 6 July. Both countries agree to adhere to it. Mitterrand declares his approval of the ruling.

9 July. Signature by Chirac and John MacArthur, the New Zealand Ambassador to France, of the *Rainbow Warrior* arbitration agreement in Paris.

23 July. Mafart and Prieur are flown to Wallis, and then to Hao Atoll for internment, as agreed to in the arbitration accord.

19 August. Paul Keating, then Australian Treasurer, announces that the Hawke Government has decided to lift its uranium embargo on France. It will sell the uranium it has purchased in order to make good a budget shortfall.

6 October. Mr Quionibaravi, representing Fiji at the UN General Assembly, suggests that France should conduct its nuclear tests in Nevada.

23 November. New Zealand, the Cook Islands, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Western Samoa, the United States, and France sign the Convention for the Protection of South Pacific Natural Resources and the Environment. The Convention opposes nuclear waste dumping in the region. In spite of the presence of nuclear waste stored on Moruroa, France announces that its nuclear tests do not breach the convention as they do not pollute the environment.

12 December. In the *Solomon Star*, Ezekiel Alebua, the Solomon Islands Prime Minister, is reported announcing his government's reaffirmation of support for the FLNKS, and of opposition to French nuclear testing.

14 December. Jean-Bernard Raimond, the French Foreign Minister, announces the return of Mafart to Paris from Hao due to medical problems.

1987

26 January. Flosse meets George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, in Washington to voice French opposition to the Rarotonga Treaty.

February. France formally notifies the South Pacific Forum that it will not ratify the Rarotonga Treaty.

20-25 June. Jacques Cousteau and his team visit Moruroa to conduct an underwater examination of the atoll.

July. Shultz states US support for French nuclear testing while in Singapore.

15 July. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV of Tonga, Pupuke Robati, the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, and Le Tagaloa Pita, the Western Samoan Foreign Minister, visit Moruroa.

29-30 August. Robati and his Foreign Minister, Norman George, visit Moruroa. They declare that the Cook Islands Government is satisfied with safety standards there.

1988

1 January. Energy Resources of Australia announces a new contract to supply uranium to France.

26 March. Vice-Admiral Thireaut announces that nuclear tests will be held on Fangataufa, an atoll 35km from Moruroa.

7 May. Prieur leaves Hao Atoll to return to metropolitan France. She is reported to be pregnant.

June. Roland Dumas, the French Foreign Minister, announces that France will declare the number of tests it makes annually.

3 June. Russell Marshall, the New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister, meets Dumas in Paris to negotiate the return of Mafart and Prieur to Hao Atoll. He does not succeed.

22 September. Marshall announces that New Zealand will submit its dispute with France over the breach of the *Rainbow Warrior* arbitration agreement to further arbitration.

October. The Fijian representative at the UN General Assembly calls for French testing to be moved to metropolitan France.

21 November. France and New Zealand name an arbitration court under UN supervision to consider the resolution of their differences.

1989

14 February. In New York, New Zealand and France agree on arbitration procedures.

7 May. Palmer, now Prime Minister of New Zealand, meets Rocard in Nouméa while attending the funeral of Tjibaou and Yeiwené. Palmer reiterates New Zealand's opposition to French nuclear testing.

October. At the UN General Assembly, the representatives of the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu welcome French reforms in New Caledonia, but reiterate their rejection of French nuclear testing.

30 October. Oral hearings for New Zealand's *Rainbow Warrior* arbitration case begin in New York.

1990

20 March. A Lomé Convention meeting in Port Moresby calls on France to halt its nuclear testing.

7 May. The UN arbitration tribunal in New York condemns France for prematurely releasing Mafart and Prieur from Hao Atoll. It declares that France has breached the *Rainbow Warrior* arbitration agreement of July 1986. It calls on France to pay \$US2M in reparations to New Zealand, which will be used to establish a friendship fund between the two countries.

17 October. At the UN General Assembly, Robert Van Lierop, the Vanuatu representative, declares South Pacific Forum opposition to French nuclear testing and its continued demand that it be halted.

18 October. The French Ministry of Defence allows a camera crew from the SBS channel to visit Moruroa. They are the first Australian TV reporters to visit the island.

1991

29 April. In Wellington Rocard apologises for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing.

21 May. An External Relations and Trade Ministry spokesman announces that New Zealand will no longer protest after each French nuclear test, but only once after each annual series. This policy is abandoned weeks later.

14 July. After the announcement that France is to award the Order of Merit to Mafart on Bastille Day, senior National Government Ministers boycott Bastille Day celebrations at the French Embassy in Wellington. Instead Wyatt Creech, the most junior New Zealand Minister, attends.

27 September. At the UN General Assembly, the PNG Education Minister, Utala Samana, attacks French nuclear testing.

23 November. Gérald Andriès, one of the French agents implicated in the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing, is arrested by Swiss police after they discovered that a New Zealand international warrant for his arrest was still in force.

18 December. Paul East, the New Zealand Attorney-General, announces that New Zealand will not seek to extradite Andriès from Switzerland, and that charges against him and other suspected participants in Operation Satanik have been dropped.

1992

8 April. In Paris, Bérégovoy announces the suspension of French nuclear testing in 1992. Fiji welcomes France's decision.

9 April. Jim Bolger, the New Zealand Prime Minister, praises the French decision to suspend testing, as do representatives for Australia and the other South Pacific Forum members.

13 April. Geoffrey Henry, the Cook Islands Prime Minister, announces that he has sent a letter to the French Government, congratulating it on its decision to suspend French nuclear testing for 1992.

22 June. Inaugural meeting of the New Zealand/France Friendship Fund Board in Paris.

8-9 July. South Pacific Forum meeting in Honiara. The Forum welcomes the French suspension of nuclear testing.

1993

6 May. The South Pacific Forum warns France that any resumption of nuclear testing would harm its relations with the region.

18 June. Dominique Perben, the Minister to the DOM-TOM, meets Ieremaia Tabai, the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Forum, in Suva. Tabai reiterates the hope of the South Pacific Forum that French testing will be suspended indefinitely.

4 July. Mitterrand announces that France will continue its suspension of nuclear testing indefinitely. Balladur announces that he and Mitterrand have decided to appoint a commission to study the feasibility of maintaining the nuclear strikeforce without testing.

11 August. The South Pacific Forum calls on France, the United States and Britain to sign the protocols of the Rarotonga Treaty, welcomes the Russian, US and French decisions to maintain their test suspensions, and urges France to implement a permanent test ban.

25 October. In spite of continued Chinese nuclear testing, Mitterrand announces that France will not recommence its tests while he is President, unless Britain, the United States or Russia do first.

17 December. In the National Assembly a parliamentary committee presents its conclusions on whether France would need to conduct tests to continue developing the nuclear strike force. The committee concludes that a further 20 tests would need to take place before they could be replaced by simulations.

**Appendix 10. France and Decolonisation Issues.
Chronology 1980-1993**

1980

30 July. Vanuatu declares its independence from France and Britain.

1981

17 June. Mitterrand informs Muldoon that the Socialist Government has no intention of organising self-determination referenda in the Pacific TOM.

1982

1 March. Tjibaou meets Muldoon in Wellington. Tjibaou declares after the meeting that Muldoon was unsupportive of Kanak independence claims.

13 March. Mara leads a Forum delegation to Paris to press the issues of New Caledonian and French Polynesian self-determination.

9-10 August. South Pacific Forum meeting in Rotorua. Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu propose taking New Caledonia's case to the UN decolonisation committee, but this proposal is rejected.

1983

17 May. Bill Hayden, the Australian Foreign Minister, is reported by *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes* as saying that Australia supports New Caledonian independence, but not by violent means.

28-29 August. South Pacific Forum meeting at Canberra. The Forum's declaration supports New Caledonian independence.

1984

3-4 October. Frank O'Flynn, the New Zealand Deputy Foreign Minister, visits Paris and meets Rocard to discuss trade issues. He declares New Zealand's confidence in French initiatives in New Caledonia.

6-7 October. Prime Minister Lange visits New Caledonia.

17 November. Prime Minister Lini expresses Vanuatu's concern over the political troubles in New Caledonia and reiterates Vanuatu support for Kanak independence.

27 November. Hayden describes New Caledonia as one of the last vestiges of colonialism in the South Pacific.

28 November. In Paris, the Australian Ambassador, Peter Curtis, is called to the Quai d'Orsay by Michel Combal, Director for Asia and Pacific Affairs. Curtis is told of the Fabius Government's astonishment over Hayden's comment about New Caledonia, and that the future of the territory is a French concern only.

29-30 November. Tjibaou and Yeiwené visit Vanuatu to meet VP Government Ministers and discuss the situation in New Caledonia.

December. At its first meeting in Wellington, the South Pacific Forum's ministerial group welcomes the appointment of Pisani as envoy to New Caledonia.

6 December. UN General Assembly debate on New Caledonia. Papua New Guinea congratulates France on its appointment of Pisani, and on its efforts to promote reform in New Caledonia.

1985

8 January. Lange welcomes the Pisani Plan.

16 January. Alan Rombers, spokesman for the US State Department, expresses US support for Pisani's reforms and states that the United States wants to see a peaceful vote on self-determination in New Caledonia.

18 January. Hayden congratulates Mitterrand on his decision to visit New Caledonia.

14 February. Tjibaou leads an FLNKS delegation to Port Vila to meet the VP Government. Vanuatu reiterates its support for Kanak independence.

5 May. At a UN decolonisation committee meeting in Tunis, Papua New Guinea accuses France of wishing to retain New Caledonia as a part of the Fifth Republic indefinitely.

11 May. After further violence in New Caledonia, Vanuatu condemns France's handling of the situation there.

2-4 June. Uregei, the FLNKS foreign minister, meets Sela Molisa, John Giheno and Daniel Sande, Foreign Ministers of Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands respectively, to discuss events in New Caledonia.

28 June. Uregei meets Hayden in Canberra and urges Australia to be more active in its support of New Caledonian independence.

19-27 July. Baylet tours New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa. He outlines French policy on New Caledonia and attempts to dissuade Forum members from considering taking New Caledonia's case to the UN.

August. Mara refuses to meet Uregei in Suva.

4-6 August. South Pacific Forum meeting on Rarotonga. The Forum reiterates its support for New Caledonian independence.

29 December. New Zealand customs officers find 5,500 rounds of ammunition on the freighter *Ile de Lumière*, bound for Nouméa.

1986

17-22 March. Two New Zealand Labour and two National MPs visit New Caledonia. RPCR leaders refuse to meet the Labour MPs, but privately meet the National MPs. Geoffrey Palmer calls the two National MPs irresponsible for doing so.

24 May. Hayden visits New Caledonia. He meets High Commissioner Wibaux, FLNKS, and RPCR representatives. Hayden does not meet Lafleur or Ukeiwé as they are in Paris. He refrains from making any statement to the French press during his stay.

17 July. Meeting, in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, of what becomes known as the Melanesian Spearhead Group. Foreign Ministers from Papua New Guinea, the Solomons and Vanuatu meet with Yann Céléné Uregei to discuss New Caledonia.

8-11 August. South Pacific Forum meeting in Suva. The Forum rejects the self-determination referendum proposed for New Caledonia and resolves to take New Caledonia's case to the UN decolonisation committee.

9 August. Pons criticises the decision made by the South Pacific Forum to take New Caledonia's case to the UN.

30 August. At a press conference in Nouméa, Chirac berates Australian policy on New Caledonia.

31 August. Hawke replies, stating his surprise at Chirac's comments.

19 December. Raimond informs the Australian Ambassador in Paris of the French decision to suspend ministerial exchanges with Australia due to its leaders' comments about the policy conduct of the Chirac Government in New Caledonia.

September. Non-Aligned Movement summit in Harere. Vanuatu lobbies to obtain observer status for the FLNKS, which is granted. Vanuatu also obtains the Movement's support for the South Pacific Forum proposal to add New Caledonia to the UN decolonisation list.

6 October. Quionbaravi, representing Fiji at the UN General Assembly, calls for New Caledonian independence.

2 December. The UN General Assembly reinscribes New Caledonia on its list of non self-governing territories.

12 December. In the *Solomon Star*, Solomon Islands Prime Minister Ezekiel Alebua is reported announcing his Government's reaffirmation of support for the FLNKS.

19 December. Following disparaging comments from Hawke and his colleagues about the conduct of New Caledonian policy, the Australian Ambassador in

Paris is informed by Raimond that the Chirac Government had decided to suspend ministerial contacts between the two countries.

1987

10 January. The Quai d'Orsay announces the expulsion of John Dauth, the Australian Consul-General, for his "interference" in local politics.

11 January. Hayden declares that the decision is unjustified.

23 January. Alebua states the Solomons' opposition to the scheduled self-determination referendum in New Caledonia and restates support for New Caledonian independence.

3 March. A South Pacific Forum meeting in Auckland adopts a resolution demanding that the Chirac Government abandon its proposed self-determination referendum for New Caledonia and start political dialogue in the territory.

17 March. The UN decolonisation committee urges France to organise its self-determination referendum in New Caledonia in cooperation with the UN.

29-30 May. South Pacific Forum meeting in Apia. Condemnation of the forthcoming self-determination referendum in New Caledonia.

2 June. Flosse meets Lange in Apia. They discuss the future of New Caledonia and general South Pacific issues.

20 June. Seven Kanak chiefs visit Vanuatu, led by Yeiwené. The government and the FLNKS group sign an Act of Union between Vanuatu and Kanaky.

August. Prime Minister Robati states that the Cook Islands Government has no position on New Caledonia.

5 September. The VP supports a protest in Port Vila against the self-determination referendum in New Caledonia.

26 September. Ministerial contacts between France and Australia are resumed when Raimond meets Hayden in New York to discuss South Pacific issues.

28 September. The UN decolonisation committee proposes that the UN General Assembly reject the results of the self-determination referendum held in New Caledonia. The motion fails.

9-15 October. Fran Wilde, the New Zealand Associate Foreign Minister, visits New Caledonia for the fortieth anniversary celebration of the South Pacific Commission. She meets Léopold Joredié and Nidoish Naisseline during her stay in the territory. She describes New Caledonian problems as a matter for Paris and Nouméa to resolve.

4 December. The UN decolonisation committee has a resolution adopted by the UN, reaffirming the right of New Caledonia to independence.

1988

21 February. André Giraud, the French Defence Minister, visits Australia as France's representative at the Australian bicentenary celebrations. His visit marks the official renewal of suspended ministerial contacts between Canberra and Paris.

7 March. Russell Marshall, the New Zealand Foreign Minister, visits New Caledonia. During his stay, he meets Raimond, Pons and Rocard. They discuss New Caledonia, nuclear testing, and the *Rainbow Warrior* arbitration.

9 March. An interview with Marshall is published in *Le Monde* (dated 10 March). He states that France has a role to play in the South Pacific.

24 April. During the Ouvéa hostage incident, Hawke cautions the Chirac Government against the use of violence as a solution to New Caledonian political problems.

26 April. The Australian Ambassador in Paris is called to the Quai d'Orsay. He is informed of France's "astonishment" at Australian "interference" in French domestic affairs in New Caledonia.

Lange blames the Chirac Government for unrest in New Caledonia and declares his hope that Mitterrand's re-election will restore peace there.

Paias Wingti, the PNG Prime Minister, states that French actions in New Caledonia are destabilising regional security.

27 April. The New Zealand Ambassador in Paris is called to the Quai d'Orsay, where New Zealand is accused of interference in French internal affairs due to Lange's comments on New Caledonia.

28 April. Lini attacks the Chirac Government for the escalation of violence in New Caledonia.

30 April. Marshall declares that the Chirac Government is responsible for the implementation of repressive policies in New Caledonia.

2 May. Raimond describes Marshall's comment on New Caledonia as "intolerable interference" in French affairs.

3 May. Mara denounces France's "gunboat diplomacy" in New Caledonia after the events on Ouvéa.

5 May. Papua New Guinea and Western Samoa protest the French assault on Ouvéa. Hayden expresses Australia's regret over the deaths on Ouvéa. He calls for restraint and a peaceful resolution to New Caledonian problems.

6 May. Lini protests the French attack on Ouvéa and the deaths resulting from it.

8 May. Sope, now Immigration and Tourism Minister, chains and padlocks the gate to the French Embassy in Port Vila in protest against French policy in New Caledonia and to support the FLNKS boycott of the elections. Around 200 protesters hinder French citizens residing in Vanuatu from voting in the French presidential elections.

21 May. In the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Hayden denies Australia had ever supported Kanak independence.

September. The VP Government sends messages to Rocard and Mitterrand, congratulating them on the Matignon Accords and their progress toward peace in New Caledonia.

7 September. Opening of a Non-Aligned Movement conference in Nicosia, Cyprus. The FLNKS does not attend. The Movement expresses satisfaction with the Matignon Accords but deplors the violence on Ouvéa.

13 September. Gareth Evans, the Australian Foreign Minister, visits New Caledonia. He meets High Commissioner Grasset, Tjibaou and Ukeiwé, and expresses support for the Matignon Accords, as well as for closer relations between New Caledonia and Australia.

22 December. The UN General Assembly announces that the 1990s will be the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The Assembly's resolution expresses approval of the Matignon Accords.

1989

13-15 February. During a visit to Canberra, Edwige Avice, Delegate Minister to Foreign Affairs, declares that France's disagreement with Australia over New Caledonia is a thing of the past. She calls for increased bilateral and multilateral exchanges between France, Australia, and its South Pacific neighbours.

20 February. Marshall visits New Caledonia to meet RPCR and FLNKS leaders and to discuss the implementation of the Matignon Accords.

22-26 April. An Australian parliamentary delegation visits New Caledonia to meet local political leaders, and to view the implementation of the Matignon Accords.

16-20 June. Hawke visits Paris. He meets Rocard, Avice, and Roger Fauroux, the French Industry and Regional Development Minister. On 19 June he meets Chirac, who he calls "my friend" in a subsequent press conference.

28 August-1 September. Marshall visits New Caledonia. He meets FLNKS and RPCR representatives. Marshall expresses New Zealand's support for the Matignon Accords.

September. At the Belgrade summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, Vanuatu raises the issue of New Caledonia. The summit reaffirms its support for New Caledonian independence and urges the continuation of peaceful political dialogue there.

8-15 September. Paul Néaoutyine and Rock Wamytan visit New Zealand as spokesmen for the FLNKS on a national speaking tour.

October. At the UN General Assembly, the representatives of the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu welcome French reforms in New Caledonia.

1990

9 March. Melanesian Spearhead Group meeting in Honiara. The Group calls on France to take further steps to address the issue of New Caledonian independence and criticises the UN for its perceived lack of monitoring of the Matignon Accords.

11 March. At Honiara, the FLNKS officially becomes a full member of the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

30 April. Evans visits New Caledonia. He meets FLNKS and RPCR leaders and discusses the possibility of obtaining observer status at the South Pacific Forum for the two parties. The FLNKS expresses interest, the RPCR does not.

6 July. Néaoutyine and Wamytan meet Lini in Port Vila to discuss FLNKS representation at the South Pacific Forum.

27-28 July. Hawke visits New Caledonia, the first visit to the territory by an Australian Prime Minister since 1941. Hawke congratulates France on progress in New Caledonia with the Matignon Accords, but announces that Australia will continue to oppose French nuclear testing.

30 July. Le Pensec represents France at Vanuatu's tenth anniversary celebrations of independence.

17 August. The UN General Assembly adopts a resolution approving the implementation of the Matignon Accords, but calls on France to take further measures to promote peaceful self-determination in New Caledonia.

9-10 October. At the UN General Assembly, Francis Bogutu, the Solomons representative, calls on the UN to add French Polynesia to its decolonisation list. Bogutu also criticises the Matignon Accords, stating that they do not guarantee independence to the FLNKS.

1991

July. Somare, now the PNG Foreign Minister, meets his French counterpart Roland Dumas in Paris. Somare expresses PNG support for the Matignon Accords and his country's hope of improving trade and cooperation.

11-21 July. Berenado Vunibobo, the Fijian Trade Minister, and Sir Peter Kenilorea, the Solomons Foreign Minister, visit New Caledonia together to view the implementation of the Matignon Accords and to discuss them with local political leaders.

22 July. Geoffrey Henry, the Cook Islands Prime Minister, states that the South Pacific Forum should leave France to solve its problems in New Caledonia. He opposes giving the FLNKS observer status at Forum meetings.

29-30 July. South Pacific Forum meeting in Palikir. Expression of support for decolonisation in New Caledonia.

21-24 November. Don McKinnon, the New Zealand Foreign Minister, visits New Caledonia to discuss trade and the progress of the Matignon Accords with local leaders. McKinnon refuses to comment on the issue of New Caledonian independence and declares that New Zealand will not push the issue at South Pacific Forum meetings.

1992

31 January. Evans meets Lafleur in Nouméa. Evans declares Australian satisfaction with the ongoing implementation of the Matignon Accords.

8-9 July. South Pacific Forum meeting at Honiara. The Forum approves the implementation of the Matignon Accords, while calling for greater social assistance to Kanaks.

1-6 September. Non-Aligned Movement summit in Jakarta. Néaoutyine attends with an FLNKS delegation. Papua New Guinea calls on the summit to renew its

support for Kanak independence, as does Némaoutyine. The summit renews its support for New Caledonian decolonisation.

20 October. At a meeting of the UN decolonisation committee Bernard Bata'anisia, the Solomons representative, expresses South Pacific Forum approval of the implementation of the Matignon Accords.

1993

18 June. Tabai expresses continued South Pacific Forum support for the Matignon Accords to Dominique Perben, Minister to the DOM-TOM, during his visit to Fiji.

July. A South Pacific Forum Ministerial Delegation on New Caledonia tours the territory to compile information for its report to the South Pacific Forum meeting in 1993.

11 August. At its meeting on Nauru, the South Pacific Forum urges France to allow a UN team to monitor the New Caledonian self-determination referendum in 1998.

13 August. Jacques Le Blanc, the Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, representing France in a post-forum dialogue meeting on Nauru, rejects the South Pacific Forum's demands, arguing that there is no need for a monitoring team because the vote will be carried out according to UN guidelines.

**Appendix 11. French Cooperation in the South Pacific.
Chronology 1981-1993**

1981

3 February. Expulsion of Yves Rodrigues, the French Ambassador to Vanuatu, and five of his staff, as reprisal from the VP Government for French refusal to allow its delegation into New Caledonia to meet FI leaders.

5 February. The Quai d'Orsay announces it will withdraw 200 French aid workers from Vanuatu. This decision is not implemented.

8 February. Lini declares that he recognises the importance of French aid to Vanuatu and states that his Government's differences with France are only temporary.

2 March. Kalpokor Kalsakau, Vanuatu's Finance Minister, agrees to accept French aid on France's condition that Paris controls the allocation of funds.

10 March. France and Vanuatu sign aid and cooperation accords, worth approximately 33.05MFF. Both parties pledge under the agreement to avoid interfering in each other's internal affairs.

3 June. An accord signed between France and Fiji opens a French air link to Wallis and Futuna via Suva.

2 October. Marc Menguy is named as Rodrigues's replacement.

16-21 November. Lini, Kalsakau and Donald Kolpakas, the Vanuatu Education Minister, visit France to discuss development funding. They meet Mauroy, Jean-Pierre Cot, Minister of Cooperation, Le Pensec, then Minister of the Sea, and Alain Savary, Minister of Education.

9 December. Lini announces that France will donate approximately 24.1MFF worth of health and education aid to Vanuatu.

1982

13 May. Upon receiving the credentials of Barak Sope, Vanuatu's new Ambassador to Paris, Mitterrand declares that differences between France and Vanuatu have been resolved.

26 May. The French Council of Ministers approves cultural, scientific and technical cooperation accords with Vanuatu.

12-19 July. Ati George Sokomanu, the President of Vanuatu, visits France. On 15 July, he meets Mitterrand. On 19 July, he meets Cheysson.

1983

5-14 February. Michel Jobert, the French Exterior Commerce Minister, visits Australia to discuss trade.

1985

15 July. France and Australia sign an accord on the exchange of classified defence contract information, primarily in relation to Mirage fighters and helicopters.

8 December. France finalises a loan of 78MFF to Vanuatu for coffee plantation development on the island of Tanna. Philippe Baude, then the French Ambassador to Vanuatu, signs the agreement in Port Vila.

1986

1 January. France gives Vt8.75M to Vanuatu for the renovation of a hospital in Port Vila.

May. Cyclone Namu renders 90,000 people homeless in the Solomon Islands. Flosse organises French aid: the *Jacques Cartier* is sent to assist with recovery work. French medical teams are sent, along with 21t of food and medicine, as part of 1MFF in French aid for cyclone relief.

28 May. In Paris, Flosse outlines French South Pacific policy to the Council of Ministers. He announces the importance of the South Pacific to France and

expresses his opinion that French aid, commerce and technical cooperation in the region should increase.

17 November. Peter Kenilorea, Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, resigns following opposition criticism of his acceptance of a \$S129,000 loan for the reconstruction of his village (damaged by cyclone Namu) from Flosse. Kenilorea is also criticised for plans to accredit the French Ambassador to Vanuatu.

1987

8 January. A 57 member team, led by Flosse, arrives in the Cook Islands to help with cyclone relief work, days before the New Zealand aid team arrives.

27-31 March. Flosse visits American Samoa, Western Samoa and Tonga to discuss French aid proposals with local leaders.

April. Vanuatu's Department of Civil Aviation receives fire fighting vehicles under a soft loan from France.

Vanuatu complains that its meteorological service is undermanned as a result of French cuts in aid.

13 April. Election of a coalition government in Fiji, led by Dr Timoci Bavadra.

14 May. Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka overthrows the Bavadra Government in a coup d'état.

15-17 May. A conference in Nouméa for French ambassadors and senior officials in the Pacific is chaired by Flosse. He announces the French South Pacific aid programme for 1988 and increased French regional cooperation.

3 July. France approves a projected 50MFF loan to the Cook Islands, scheduled for 1989.

August. Flosse visits Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Niue.

14-15 August 1987. Flosse visits Fiji, and offers French aid. He meets Mara, Rabuka, and Sir Ratu Penaia Ganilau, the Governor-General.

2-9 September. Robati visits France as Prime Minister of the Cook Islands to discuss trade and aid issues. He meets Chirac.

25 September. Second coup d'état by Rabuka.

Flosse visits Fiji to discuss French aid.

October. Flosse revisits Niue, Nauru, and Kiribati. Niue asks for French funding to improve its telephone network. France's offer of a satellite communication ground station, worth approximately 2.8MFF, is later refused due to local opposition to dealing with France, and to differences over aspects of the proposal. Nauru asks for French help in its court case against Australia, New Zealand and Britain. It is not forthcoming.

Flosse hosts visits to Paris by the Tongan Education Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister of Western Samoa, Tupuola Efi, and by the Lieutenant Governor of American Samoa, Eni Hunkin.

The French Navy patrol boats *La Glorieuse* and *La Railleuse* visit Suva.

1 October. Vanuatu expels Henri Crépin-Leblond, the French Ambassador to Vanuatu, for allegedly interfering in local politics.

16 October. The French Embassy in Suva indicates that France is prepared to continue relations with Fiji.

22 October. Chirac's Interministerial Committee meets in Paris to discuss, and increase, French aid to Fiji.

2 November. Three more French diplomats are expelled from Port Vila. France responds by reducing its ambassadorial staff to two, by cutting back aid and by withdrawing 30 French aid workers.

1988

January. Announcement of a major French aid package to Fiji, which will include an Ecureuil helicopter and 52 trucks, mainly for the Fijian Army.

24-28 January. The French frigate *Balny* visits Suva and is greeted by Rabuka.

28 March. President Sokomanu of Vanuatu urges the VP Government to normalise relations with France due to the adverse economic effects of the reduction of French aid.

5 April. Mara visits Chirac and Flosse in Paris to discuss future French aid to Fiji.

6 April. Mara signs an economic development agreement worth 43MFF with Edouard Balladur, at that time the French Finance Minister.

8 April. Bavadra criticises Fiji's acceptance of French aid, claiming it is a French attempt to influence and weaken Fijian policy on New Caledonia and on French nuclear testing.

June. France offers Fiji \$F1.96M to broaden Melanesian participation in local business.

24 October. A scientific and technical cooperation accord is signed by France and Australia.

2 November. Vanuatu receives a cheque for Vt1.487M for the training of French-speaking secondary school teachers.

1989

January. A French loan agreement with Fiji worth approximately 45.79MFF is signed in Paris. The funds are distributed to the Fijian Civil Aviation Authority, the Post and Telecommunications Department and the Fiji Sugar Corporation.

April. A Fijian Major, Samu Saumatu, travels to France for a nine month training course at the French staff college at Compiègne.

May. Going back on its earlier refusal, Niue accepts the installation of a French satellite ground station.

15 June. The Fijian Foreign Secretary, Mr Vakatale, states that increased French aid does not affect Fiji's opposition to nuclear testing.

August-September. Two Fijian Army lieutenants undergo helicopter pilot training in Singapore with French Government funding.

22 August. Avice leaves Rocard's mission to the South Pacific for a one day visit to Tonga. She is a guest at the Third South Pacific Mini-Games, where she sees Lapérouse Stadium in use. The stadium was constructed with \$T2.8M in funds provided by France.

23 August. Rocard visits Suva. He denies that France has lent military aid to Fiji.

24 August. Geoffrey Henry, the Cook Islands Prime Minister, meets Rocard in Papeete. They discuss the possibility of French assistance in monitoring the EEZ of the Cook Islands.

30 November-9 December. Bernard Grasset, the High Commissioner of New Caledonia, and Jacques Iekawé, a territorial representative for New Caledonia, visit New Zealand to discuss technical cooperation with New Caledonia.

1990

15 March. The French Embassy in Suva announces it has set up a Trade Commission.

May. The Australia-France Foundation is created to serve as an agent for the development of bilateral relations.

20-21 June. A French Navy Gardian jet gives a demonstration of its maritime surveillance capabilities to Fijian Government representatives. Following the demonstration, Fiji asks for, and receives, French assistance in maritime surveillance of its EEZ.

July. Atanroi Baiteke, Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission, makes his first visit to Paris. He meets Rocard and Le Pensec to discuss multilateral aid in the South Pacific.

22 July. Australia and France agree to work together on promoting international environmental protection policies.

29 July. Le Pensec visits Port Vila to open a telephone exchange funded by France. This is the first French ministerial visit there since July 1980.

6-7 August. Jacques Manent, Assistant Director of the Asia/Oceania Directorate of the French Foreign Ministry, visits New Zealand to discuss regional cooperation.

12-23 August. An ADRAF delegation from New Caledonia studies Fijian land reform and management.

September. A Fijian trade delegation visits French Polynesia.

5-7 September. A French Navy jet conducts the first French surveillance sweep of the Cook Islands' EEZ.

11 September. Jean Gardère and Jean Frimat, representatives from the French Embassy in Suva, visit Tonga to discuss aid programmes. They present a cheque for approximately 53,000FF to assist Tonga in reconstruction following cyclone Ofa.

During a meeting with Vanuatu's Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Nikenike Vurobaravo, Mitterrand says France will cancel some of Vanuatu's debts to encourage economic growth.

1-4 October. The Vanuatu Minister of Agriculture, Jacques Hopa, and Land Minister William Mahit, visit New Caledonia to study ADRAF's land reform schemes.

1991

9-16 February. Jean-François Carencu, the Secretary-General of the New Caledonian Territorial Congress, visits New Zealand. He discusses trade and investment between New Zealand and New Caledonia with National Government Ministers.

16-23 February. Simon Loueckhote, the President of the New Caledonian Territorial Congress, leads a four-member delegation to New Zealand to discuss bilateral cooperation.

February. France donates Vt1.76M worth of teaching materials to Vanuatu.

April. A Fijian trade delegation visits New Caledonia.

May. Louis de Corial, a French embassy official from Suva, visits Tuvalu. Discussion of the opening of a shipping route between Tuvalu and Wallis and Futuna. Review of local French aid projects.

23 May. Tonga receives two cars and six trucks from France, for its Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

27 May. HMNZS *Southland* visits Papeete; the first New Zealand naval vessel to do so since 1979.

July. Somare, now the PNG Foreign Minister, meets his French counterpart, Roland Dumas, in Paris. Somare expresses the hope of improving bilateral trade and cooperation.

Jacques Le Blanc, the Permanent Secretary to the South Pacific, visits Fiji for five days. He announces an increase in French aid to Fiji.

16-20 July. Alain Vivien, French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, visits Papua New Guinea. He meets Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu, and Somare, to discuss future trade.

23 July. In Paris, Vivien declares the desirability of developing French economic cooperation with Papua New Guinea. He expresses disagreement with the decision to close the Port Moresby Embassy.

7-14 August. A New Caledonian trade delegation visits Fiji.

5 November. The first French trade mission to Papua New Guinea is welcomed by government officials.

2 December. Defeat of the VP Government in Vanuatu's legislative elections. Maxime Carlot, a French-speaking moderate, leads a coalition government.

1992

January. Fiji receives a Dauphin surveillance and cargo helicopter, worth approximately 30MFF, from France.

A ministerial delegation from Vanuatu visits New Caledonia to meet local political leaders and Christnacht. Discussions centre on increasing trade between Vanuatu and New Caledonia.

February. The Cook Islands Government signs a loan agreement worth approximately 5MFF with France to fund the renovation of Rarotonga's water supply.

1-2 February. Carlot proposes to Vice-Admiral Querat, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Pacific Naval Squadron, that France should assist Vanuatu in its maritime surveillance to supplement Australian assistance. The proposal is accepted.

7 February. Henri Jacolin, the French Ambassador to Fiji, visits Tonga to discuss French aid.

29 March-3 April. Lafleur visits New Zealand to discuss trade and agricultural technical assistance to New Caledonia.

24 April. Philippe Guérin, France's *chargé d'affaires* in Port Vila, and Romain Batick, the Vanuatu Education Minister, sign a student exchange programme between the Port Vila branch of the University of the South Pacific and the Nouméa campus of the French University of the South Pacific.

6-7 May. Richard Kaloi, President of the Loyalty Islands Province, visits Port Vila to discuss provincial cultural, agricultural and educational cooperation with Vanuatu.

11-20 May. Carlot visits Paris. He meets Bérégovoy and they normalise relations between Vanuatu and France.

8-9 July. At its meeting in Honiara, the South Pacific Forum declares its approval of increased New Caledonian representation in regional affairs.

14 July. Bikenibeu Paeniu, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, meets Jacolin in Suva to discuss increasing French aid to Tuvalu.

August. Kaloi pays a five day visit to Fiji to investigate Fijian land reform.

Vanuatu establishes a Consulate in Nouméa.

1 September. The nomination of Jean Mazeo as France's first Ambassador to Vanuatu since 1987 is announced.

22-29 November. A New Caledonian delegation visits, including Christnacht, Kaloi, Jorédié, and South Province Councillors. They visit Massey University and Fortex in Christchurch to investigate agricultural technology, and meet Government representatives in Wellington.

December. Serge Vohor, the Vanuatu Education Minister, concludes an exchange agreement permitting French teachers to assist in Francophone education in Vanuatu.

22 December. Signature in Wellington of a South Pacific disaster relief coordination agreement between France, New Zealand and Australia. Le Pensec signs on behalf of France, McKinnon on behalf of New Zealand, and Stephen Martin, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, signs on behalf of Australia.

1993

January. After two cyclones cause serious damage in Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Fiji, Tonga, and Niue, the disaster relief coordination agreement is implemented for the first time.

February. Official opening of the orthopedic ward constructed with French funds at the Western Samoan National Hospital in Apia.

23 March. The French Embassy in Suva announces that France and Fiji have signed an agreement on a military training exchange. From May to June, a platoon of French soldiers based in New Caledonia will train in Fiji, while a platoon of Fijian soldiers trains in New Caledonia.

30 March. Cyclone Prema hits Vanuatu. France, Australia and New Zealand coordinate a joint relief effort.

April. John Kaputin, the PNG Foreign Minister, tours New Caledonia to view progress under the Matignon Accords. In the Loyalty Islands, he holds talks with Kaloi about a training scheme for Loyalty Islanders, to be run by the PNG Foreign Affairs Department.

19-24 April. Prime Minister Carlot makes an official tour of New Caledonia.

21 April. Official opening of the Vanuatu Consulate in Nouméa, presided over by Carlot. Serge Bourdet, former Secretary-General of the Port Vila Chamber of Commerce, is appointed as the first Consul.

10-14 May. *Jacques Cartier*, the first French Navy ship to visit New Zealand since 1984, calls at Devonport naval base in Auckland.

31 May. French, Australian and New Zealand officials meet in Honiara to discuss coordination of EEZ surveillance in the South Pacific. They agree to exchange flight information.

June-December. Vanuatu sends 20 men from its Mobile Force to receive police training in New Caledonia as security men. They receive instruction in shooting, self-defence and security procedures in preparation for their assignment in December as body guards for VIPs at the South Pacific Mini-Games in Port Vila.

17 June. Prime Minister Rabuka tells Perben, the Minister to the DOM-TOM, during his visit to Suva that Fiji values French aid and friendship. Perben assures Rabuka that France holds Fiji in high esteem.

18 June. Tabai, during his meeting with Perben in Suva, tells him that the South Pacific Forum aims to strengthen regional cooperation with France and its Pacific TOM.

September. French troops from New Caledonia, along with US troops and the Tonga Defence Force participate in joint training exercises in Tonga.

13-18 July. Carlot and a Vanuatu delegation spend time in Paris. Carlot meets Perben to discuss ongoing aid and cooperation, and discusses cultural links with Jacques Toubon, Minister of Culture and Francophonie in the Balladur Government. In his capacity as Mayor of Paris, Chirac offers Carlot municipal aid to Port Vila, while with Balladur Carlot discusses the draft of a bilateral friendship and cooperation accord.

1 October. A New Caledonian delegation including Lafleur, Jorédié, Kaloi, and Christnacht concludes a week-long tour of Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra, during which they met Paul Keating, the Australian Prime Minister.

November. A 21-member delegation from the Loyalty Islands visits Fiji to investigate Fijian land reform.

19 November. A development and cooperation agreement between Vanuatu and New Caledonia is signed in Port Vila. The document covers the areas of trade, education, health, training and sports.

December. Under the disaster relief coordination agreement between France, Australia and New Zealand, *Prairial*, a French naval vessel, departs from Darwin to transport \$A35,000 worth of medical supplies and 5t of powdered milk to earthquake victims in Papua New Guinea.

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